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NEW-JERUSALEM MAGAZINE.

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THE RELATION OF THE NEW CHURCH TO AGNOSTICISM.

Periculōsum est credere, et non credere. (PHAEDRUS.)

THOUGHTFUL men in all the churches are beginning to feel much concern at the growth of what is called agnosticism, a modern form of unbelief which may lead to a denial of all revealed religion.

In stating what this new word really stands for, it is well for us to take the definition of its meaning as given by Mr. Huxley, who claims to be the father of it. His explanation of how he came to adopt it is worth referring to. He says he became a member of what was called "The Metaphysical Society." On entering it, he found all the different members had some idea or theory in philosophy or metaphysics, while he was without any, and so seemed to be like the fox who had lost his tail in a trap. As he did not believe in any of the theories of his fellow members, and could not say that he believed any thing similar, therefore he called himself an agnostic, and his system of unbelief or want of definite knowledge, agnosticism. Then he felt quite proud that he had a tail like the others. This little bit of witticism has more point in it than perhaps Mr. Huxley intended. If one were disposed to adopt the symbol as somewhat significative, he would see that the little animal who "spoils the vines" is always ready, from its native cunning, to adopt any artifice to prevent its real character from being known.

But it would not do to reduce the learned philosopher to the level of a beast. Let us rather treat him as a fellow human being, endowed with higher faculties than instinct and cunning, and capable of reason and affection.

In meeting any form of belief or unbelief in the mind of another, if we would either refute it or accept it, we ought to take his own statement of what that belief is, especially if he claims to be the father of it. It is a great satisfaction to know that Mr. Huxley has given us in one of his latest contributions to the subject a clear and distinct statement of what agnosticism really means, as he understands it. He says:

> Agnosticism is not properly described as a negative creed, nor indeed as a creed of any kind, except so far as it expresses absolute faith in the validity of a principle which is as much ethical as intellectual. This principle may be stated in various ways, but they all amount to this — that it is wrong for a man to say that he is certain of the truth of any proposition, unless he can produce evidence which logically justifies that certainty. This is what agnosticism asserts, and in my opinion it is all that is essential to agnosticism. That which agnostics deny and repudiate as immoral is the contrary doctrine that there are propositions which men ought to believe without logical, scientific evidence. (*Nineteenth Century.*)

Another agnostic of even more pronounced unbelief than Mr. Huxley, but less logical than he, is Mr. Robert G. Ingersoll. In a recent article in the *North American Review*, entitled "Why am I an Agnostic?" Mr. Ingersoll says:

> The same rules or laws of probability must govern in religious questions as in others. There is no subject — and can be none — concerning which any human being is under any obligation to believe without evidence. . . .

Further he says:

> It seems to me that the man who knows the limitations of the mind, who gives the proper value to human testimony, is necessarily an agnostic. . . . I give up the hope of ascertaining first or final causes, of comprehending the supernatural, or of conceiving of an infinite personality. Is it possible for the human mind to

conceive of an infinite personality? Can it conceive of a beginningless being infinitely powerful and intelligent?

These quotations are sufficient. We shall make no mistake in accepting them as expressing the honest conviction of the leading agnostics. I say honest conviction, because if we do not or cannot admit common honesty in another, we cannot properly discuss his opinions.

Now these views have caused a feeling of alarm in the minds of Christian people, especially with those who hold to a belief in a Divine Saviour and a revelation of His wisdom. But it does not appear that agnosticism finds a strong refutation at their hands. There are many objections to the old forms of faith and Scripture interpretation urged by the agnostics, that have not been satisfactorily answered by their opponents, and cannot be. There appears no David with a few smooth stones from the brook to hurl at this Goliath.

It seems to me that there is lurking in the camp of Israel a similar spirit of unbelief. We see it in the old doctrine of the resurrection of the body, in an unwillingness to hear anything about the nature of spirit or the reality of the spiritual world, and in the gradual decadence of faith. A recent instance may be cited to show the alarm that is felt, and the acknowledgment of the need of a higher philosophy. In *The Microcosm*, of December, 1889, a monthly journal edited and published by A. Wilford Hall, Ph. D., LL.D., and devoted to the advocacy of what the editor calls "Substantialism" as opposite to materialism, there appears an earnest appeal in the form of a circular letter, written by the Rev. Dr. James A. Buck, Rector of St. Paul's Church, Washington, D. C., and sent to all his ministering brethren of that church, urging them to adopt the new philosophy of substantialism, so called, for the purpose of "counteracting the rapidly growing tendency to agnosticism and materialistic infidelity."

The Southern Presbyterian Assembly, also, which met recently in Philadelphia, was much agitated with the question of how to meet the Darwinian theory of evolution, which they believed to be mere materialism.

Now, while we cannot feel this alarm in the New Church, since our confidence in the truths of the New Dispensation is such as to create the belief that in the Providence of the Lord these truths will furnish a complete and satisfactory refutation of all false systems of philosophy, we cannot be indifferent to the struggle that is going on, nor properly refuse to do our part in bringing these truths of the New Church to the notice of the religious and scientific world in connection with the subject before us. If materialism, rationalism, and infidelity were confined to a few schoolmen or philosophers, we might feel much less concern, but we find a growing tendency among intelligent young men and women of all classes to adopt the agnostic idea, and especially among students in our colleges. The sanction of such a great name as Mr. Huxley's is sufficient to draw and captivate the young student, although Mr. Huxley himself would be the last one, probably, to encourage such a tendency, when it is not accompanied by manly intellectual effort to see the truth.

The common feeling in the New Church seems to be that those who have become confirmed in the Agnostic idea, so far as to declare that there is no evidence of the existence of a personal Divine Being, can hardly be persuaded of their error or be led to see the truths of the New Church which teach us of the nature of man as a spiritual being, and his relation to God.

As to confirmation in false ideas, we would do well to guard ourselves against judging the states of others, even when the appearance is so strong that confirmation in what is false is deep-seated and immovable. For instance, we read in the writings of the New Church of corporeal spirits in the other world, who in this world have been distinguished by their talents, and also by their proficiency in the sciences, and have thereby confirmed themselves entirely against the Divine, thus against those things which are of the church; and who because they have absolutely persuaded themselves that all things were to be attributed to nature have closed interior things to themselves, thus the things that belong to the spirit, more than others; hence they appear grossly corpo-

real. (A. C. 5991.) The very natural gifts which they possess, which ought to be used as a means of right thinking about God, are used for the purpose of confirming the mind against the Divine. Now it is not the part of wisdom to conclude that some one whom we have in our mind's eye is so far sunk in corporeal ideas, that he has closed the interiors of his mind to spiritual or rational truths. "If Ephraim be joined to his idols," it is well to "let him alone"; but let us understand that it is only when false ideas are joined to evils in the heart that the work of spiritual enlightenment becomes impossible; and since man's internal or spiritual state is known only to the Lord, let us not conclude that any one is incapable of such enlightenment. The New Church has this advantage, she respects the freedom of all and recognizes the rational faculty as an essential factor in the formation of faith. Instead of the old maxim in theology that "the understanding must be kept in obedience to faith," we have written over the portals of the new temple, "Now it is lawful to enter intellectually into the mysteries of faith."

Now while I am willing to admit the difficulty, yea the impossibility, of leading any one to see the truth who is in the negative principle, which is so plainly taught in the writings of the New Church, I am unwilling to assume that an honest agnostic, who stands simply upon Mr. Huxley's definition of agnosticism, cannot in any way be led to accept the philosophy of the New Church.

It may be well here to give Swedenborg's explanation of the affirmative and the negative principle. He says:

> There are two principles, one that leads to all stupidity and insanity, the other to all intelligence and wisdom. The former principle is to deny all things that belong to the Word, or to doctrine from the Word; or, in saying from the heart that one cannot believe those things before he is convinced by such things as he can take hold of or feel. This principle is that which leads to all stupidity and insanity, and may be called the negative principle. The other principle consists in affirming those things which belong to doctrine from the Word, or in thinking and believing within one's self that those things are true because the Lord has spoken

them. This principle leads to all intelligence and wisdom, and may be called the affirmative principle. The more those who think from the negative principle consult rational, scientific, and philosophical things, the more they cast themselves and rush into darkness, until at length they deny all things. The reason is that no one can comprehend higher from lower things, that is, spiritual and celestial, and still less Divine things from things rational, scientific, and philosophical, because the former things transcend all understanding; and because each single thing in this case, from this principle, is involved in negative things. Those persons, on the other hand, who think from the affirmative principle are able to confirm themselves by whatever rational, scientific, yea philosophical things are within their power; for all these things serve them for confirmations and give them a fuller idea. Moreover there are those who are in doubt before denying and there are those who are in doubt before affirming. Those who are in doubt before denying are they who incline to a life of evil; and so far as they, when carried away by that life, think of things spiritual and celestial, so much they deny. But those who are in doubt before affirming are they who incline to a good life, and in proportion as they, when they suffer themselves to be bent by the Lord towards that life, think of the above things, in the same proportion they affirm them. (A. C. 2568.)

This subject is more particularly explained and illustrated by Swedenborg in n. 2588 of the same work. From this it appears that an evil life tends to confirm a man in the denial of Divine revelation, while a good life confirms him in true faith. We cannot tell who is in the state of doubt preceding the utter negation of truth, or who is in the state of doubt preceding the affirmation of truth. Honest doubts are generally the forerunners of true faith. Mr. Huxley says: "Agnosticism is not properly described as a negative creed."

This might be called a quibble, since what is not believed is disbelieved, and what is not received is rejected. But the rejection of truth may not be final, and we must not forget that the state of doubt may last a long time, even a whole lifetime. There are some who have come into a full reception of the doctrines of the New Church only after long years of doubt and even of struggle against them. The point upon

which Mr. Huxley dwells, and I quote him now as the fairest exponent of agnosticism, is the lack of evidence. He declares that "it is immoral for a man to say that he is certain of the truth of any proposition unless he can produce evidence which logically justifies that certainty. This is what agnosticism asserts."

Here we find a difficulty at the very outset. What kind of evidence will satisfy the mind of one who is not disposed to believe, or even of one who is so disposed? Endeavoring, however, to keep our minds free from all personal judgment, which is wrong in any relation of life or on any question, let us bend our thought to this one point, giving every doubting soul the credit of an honest desire to know the truth.

What kind of evidence will justify a man in believing in the personality of God, or even in the existence of a Creator? It does not appear that Mr. Huxley absolutely denies that there is a God, but he only asserts that there is no evidence that there is one. The old argument of design does not satisfy him. Mr. Ingersoll can find natural causes, near or remote, but he is not able to find a final cause of creation which is intelligent, human, yet supreme, absolute, and infinite, having no beginning. There is no evidence that such a being exists. The God of Jewish history or of modern Christianity, is a human creation, as much so as the idols of Egypt and Canaan, or the gods and demigods of Greece and Rome. And Mr. Ingersoll has said with keen satire, "An honest god is the noblest work of man."

Now we may concede at once that no man by "searching can find out God"; that there is no evidence that can be brought to the natural senses that will convince a man on this question. Nature is a grand theatre representative of the Lord's kingdom, we say in the New Church — and we believe it. The wisdom of God is seen in His works; but no man, not even such a philosopher as Mr. Huxley, skilled in the knowledge of the phenomena and laws of the natural world, can show from natural evidence alone that the Divine Being created all things of the natural world, from His Divine love and according to His Divine wisdom.

Swedenborg was such a philosopher, but he could not arrive at a true knowledge of the Divine Being, the nature of spirit, and the connection and communication between the natural and the spiritual world from his profound knowledge of the laws of mind and matter. He tried it, but he found after climbing the ladder to the top round, that there was a discrete degree of difference between what is natural and what is spiritual, and that there is no ratio between the finite and the infinite. The relation between them is that of cause and effect — the lower or natural corresponding to the spiritual, because it is derived from it, but not existing simultaneously with it on the same plane of existence. The nearest approach that Swedenborg made by the logical method to the solution of the problem of the agnostic, is found in his little work called "Prodomus; or, Outlines of a Philosophical Argument on the Infinite," written about fourteen years before he published his first theological work. In this work he speaks of the need of a "nexus" between the finite and the infinite, and he declares this "nexus" to be the only Begotten, or Jesus Christ — an admission, I think, he would not have made, as a philosopher, had he not already been educated in the Christian faith. In this same work, also, he speaks of the law of correspondence, but not in the full meaning in which he subsequently treats of it in his theological works. We assert, then, as a principle, that there is no door of entrance to the temple of heavenly wisdom or to a knowledge of spiritual and Divine things through the natural senses, or by cognition of the laws of natural science or philosophy. We declare, also, that no one can know of the existence of the Divine Being, or the Creator, from natural creation alone, or without a revelation from God. The reason of this is, that man not having life in himself but being only a form receptive of life from the Divine, can have neither wisdom nor goodness except it be imparted to him either mediately or immediately by God, the Creator. "Every good and perfect gift cometh from above." Moreover, man has no connate knowledge on any subject whatever, but must be taught even how to take care of himself. It is not "immoral" to make this assertion,

as it is capable of proof. The necessity of revelation, therefore, must be admitted, if one claims that the knowledge of God is possible for man.

As to the nature of revelation, this demands a separate discussion. We are brought, therefore, to a plain issue which cannot be avoided. When it is declared that spiritual and Divine things must be made real to the natural senses, and that nothing can be accepted as truth unless it be proved by logical, scientific evidence, we are constrained to ask whether Mr. Huxley himself does not believe some things which have never been demonstrated to him by the usual logical or scientific methods. Even away down on the physical plane there are operations which are not capable of explanation in a purely scientific way. The action of the brain and its connection with the whole nervous system, the dependance of one organ upon another, the processes of assimilation, digestion, and nutrition are only partly explained by actual phenomena or experiment. These operations are not merely mechanical. Indeed, the growth of the human body, of all animals and plants, and thus the whole work of creation is an unseen work, and miraculous even to the educated mind. Well may the Psalmist exclaim: "My substance was not hid from Thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect, and in Thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." (Ps. cxxxix. 15, 16.) Then if we go higher into the mental world where man has as real an existence as he has in the physical world, we find it utterly impossible to establish any law based upon mere phenomena, or even by pure reason. Human thought and affection are living forces or powers which are not limited by time and space and are known to exist, not from scientific evidence but from human living experience. Now to deny that man thinks or loves because the fact cannot be proved by the ordinary logical and scientific methods, is to be agnostic with respect to everything above the corporeal and sensual plane of life. Indeed there is great uncertainty about all knowledge derived

from the senses, and utter fallacies are imbibed by trusting to them alone. Those, therefore, who declare that they will not believe anything that they cannot be made sensible of by outward impression, will necessarily deny not only the existence of God but their own spiritual being or existence.

The law of cause and effect must be traced upward as far as we can carry it, and then we shall be able to see that the Infinite cannot be wholly grasped or comprehended by the finite, but that the finite mind having been created by the Infinite is capable of receiving light or intelligence from the Creator. The evidence is not wanting, but it is not self-derived; neither can it be received outwardly through the senses. Mr. Ingersoll speaks of the limitations of the mind; now these limitations are not such as are derived from time and space. Human thought and affection are unlimited, although they are finite. The angels are finite beings; but they are continually growing wiser and more loving from the infinite wisdom and love of the Lord. Swedenborg speaks of the knowledge of the doctrine of degrees in man's life, as being essential to all spiritual knowledge — to an understanding of ourselves as spiritual beings, of the book of nature, and of the book of revelation — and included in this knowledge, of course, the idea of correspondence, which is the relation of cause and effect. The natural world corresponds to the spiritual, the human body to the human soul, the letter of Divine revelation to its spirit. But no man can suddenly leap from the lower to the higher, nor can he penetrate spiritual mysteries at all by natural intuition. The higher degrees of life in man from the rational to the spiritual and celestial are successively opened by influx from the Lord as man is educated and instructed in truths received through the memory and understanding and becomes obedient, faithful, and loving in speech and action. The Apostle Paul, with the dim light of his age, recognized the difference between truth seen only in natural light, and that which is spiritually perceived, or seen as truth derived from God. He said: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. ii. 14.)

The chief danger of a blind agnosticism is that it closes the mind instead of opening it. It limits human knowledge to the things of this world and shuts out the light of heaven. And beyond this great defect, it deprives the soul of all its highest hopes and aspirations, it takes away the "thirst for the Infinite." The love of natural science has its delights which are not to be despised, and these delights the man of science would not take away from us. He invites us to drink from the fountain of knowledge. But there is "a well of water springing up into everlasting life," and there are "fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills," which form the river of life whose "streams make glad the city of our God." Of this water of life, the Lord Himself invites us to drink. He says: "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink."

Brookline Mass. WILLARD H. HINKLEY.

A BURIED OASIS. — A discovery of much archæological interest was recently made in the Algerian Sahara. M. Tarry, who has been carrying on work in connection with the proposed Trans-Sahara Railroad, having noticed a mound of sand in the neighborhood of Wargal, had the sand dug up, and discovered the top of a dome. This naturally aroused his interest, and, getting his Arabs to dig still deeper, he found underneath the dome a square tower, then a platform of masonry, and finally a complete mosque. Continuing the excavations, M. Tarry soon unearthed seven houses in perfect preservation, and came upon a subterranean watercourse. At the last news, nine houses had been disinterred, and M. Tarry was getting additional assistance to clear out the precious watercourse, which he describes as sufficient to irrigate a small forest of palms. It is well known that the Sahara was at one time much more populated than it is now and its trade much more extensive; but no one seems to have supposed that cities had been buried under its sands, at least so recently as since the introduction of Mohammedanism.— *South-western Presbyterian.*

THE INCREASE OF SUICIDE.

This subject is not a pleasant one in itself; but so far as it may be considered an index of the state of society at any given period, it is important and worthy of careful attention. No lover of mankind can be indifferent to any question which seriously affects the general welfare; and if, as seems to be the case, suicide is on the increase in all civilized countries, including our own, the fact should possess for us more than a passing interest. A just analysis of the evil itself, and of the causes which produce it, is at least one step towards resisting its onward progress and hastening the day of its effacement. There is not one of us but may have an opportunity to save some despairing soul from the commission of this great sin; and the better we understand its nature ourselves, the more efficient will be our help. Such opportunities have been my own, and the experience connected with them has led me to believe that the New Church has a message to deliver on this subject which will be of service to all whom it reaches.

It has not been possible nor does it seem necessary to gather together a great mass of statistics in relation to the matter. Every reader of the daily papers in late years must have had his attention drawn to the frequency of suicide. Three cases on a single Sunday were reported last month in the city of New York. Almost four in a week was the average for the State of Massachusetts during the year 1888. Or, to speak accurately, the whole number was 190, the largest ever known. In 1869, twenty years ago, only 92 cases were reported; and although the population of the State has greatly increased since then, the ratio of suicidal deaths has increased more rapidly. For the ten years between 1869 and 1879 that ratio was to the total mortality as 3.9 to 1,000. From 1879 to 1889 it was as 4.4 to 1,000. The percentage in Massachusetts is a little higher than that of England, and about half that of France. At least 75 per cent. of suicides in all countries are males.

The above figures are serious and significant, even though they be not accounted startling. It is no small matter that nearly two hundred persons annually die by their own hands in our commonwealth, to say nothing of the many attempts made which are unsuccessful. Of the whole number of deaths from this cause in 1888, fifty, or more than a quarter, were in Suffolk county — which means one a week in our own immediate community.

As for the essential nature of this crime, there should be but little difficulty in seeing and understanding it. It is a direct violation of the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill." All life is the Lord's. He giveth and He taketh away. We have no right to interfere with the order of His giving or taking. He has placed us in this world for His own wise purposes. He alone knows how long our earthly sojourning may usefully continue. In His good time He will call us hence. To take the matter into our own hands with regard to any of our fellowmen is universally acknowledged to be the height of iniquity. It is no less disorderly when we ourselves are the objects of our violence. There may not be in the latter case the same anger or hatred, but our act is equally obnoxious to Him who "saw every thing that He had made, and behold it was very good." The end which He has in view is our eternal happiness. If while we live here He permits us to suffer some natural privations and trials, it is for the sake of that higher end. He intends that we should be refined and purified in the furnace of affliction. Any attempt at self-destruction with a view of escaping this needful discipline is a deliberate endeavor to thwart His purpose. It is a base and cowardly defiance of His Providence, a gross and wanton usurpation of His Divine prerogatives in the government of men. All the higher instincts of our nature cry out with one voice against it as the most monstrous abuse of the freedom and reason with which He has endowed us, thereby seeking to raise us above the beasts that perish.

Our natural life therefore is not our own to do with as we will; but it is a gift placed in our keeping by the Lord, to use, to preserve, and to enjoy as far as possible according to

His laws. To treat it in any other way is to be guilty of sin against Him. As much as this should be evident to all believers in the one God. But the doctrines of the New Church throw further light on the subject. By the knowledge which they give of the life after death, they enable us to see how futile must be all attempts to find peace and happiness through self-murder. Hamlet, in his famous soliloquy, asks the question which he does not fully answer, whether it be better to live here, and

> bear those ills we have,
> Than fly to others that we know not of.

But for ourselves, as New-Churchmen, the answer is not doubtful. Wherever man may go, in the body or out of the body, the one thing which he cannot do is to get away from himself. The dominating fact of his existence is that the kingdom of God, if he has any connection with it, must be within him. And this means that his state of mind, whether it be good or evil, constitutes his real life. That state accompanies him everywhere. It is the source of his happiness or misery. To a certain extent it may be modified by external circumstances, but not thus is it essentially changed. The Lord gives to every man the power, if he will, to rise superior to circumstances. We know how far persistent selfishness may go to keep one discontented in the most charming and favorable environment. The little boy, mentioned in a recent article in the NEW-JERUSALEM MAGAZINE, who was found sobbing because he could not think of any thing to ask for, is a type of this class.

Now the state in which we pass out of this world continues into the other world. So far as it is a confirmed and settled state, it never ceases to eternity. Moreover, the outward conditions by which men are surrounded in that world are not independent of their states, but exist in perfect harmony and correspondence with them. In fact the environment is the exact expression of the inner man. So that he who blindly rushes into the other life by his own rash act, not only carries with him his desperate and faithless state of mind, but has no means of escape from the conditions which it necessarily en-

genders, save such as come from a deep sense of its wickedness, and sincere repentance. This is the only way of being delivered from evil influences either in the present world or in the world to come. And the appointed time for repentance is during the formative and preparatory period of earthly life, not after the character has been moulded and indurated by neglect of the opportunities which the Lord so mercifully and abundantly provides.

Shall we briefly analyze some of the states of mind which most frequently culminate in suicide? I pass over those which are closely connected with physical conditions, such as extreme nervousness, insomnia, etc. These belong to the province of natural rather than spiritual pathology. And yet it may well be questioned, in every instance, how far they might have been avoided if the necessary spiritual control had been exercised during the preliminary stages of the disease, or even at the last critical moment. Aside from these cases, however, it would be generally agreed that the usual excuse for self-destruction is some kind of adverse circumstances. A man's business affairs become involved — he is unable to pay his debts; bankruptcy stares him in the face, he is afraid to meet his creditors, or ashamed to be poor. So, as the phrase is, he makes way with himself. He ceases to be an actor on the scene of his troubles. That his deed was to the last degree cowardly, every one can see. That it was a desertion of the post of honor and duty is perfectly plain. How disconnected it was from all but natural and worldly considerations is clearly manifest. And this is the same as saying that it was in its essence supremely selfish. Regardless of others' happiness, thinking only of freeing himself from temporary difficulties, he committed the fatal act. Doubtless many false and subtle reasonings took possession of his mind, almost persuading him that he would do right in relieving wife and children, society and the world at large, of his undesirable presence. But no such thoughts would ever have occurred to him, unless they had been prompted by the wish to find, if possible, a refuge for himself beyond the reach of troubles. A moment's really unselfish considera-

tion for others would have turned him from the utter absorption of his own grief, and aroused him to the manly determination on their account, if not on his own, of facing his responsibilities and bearing his burdens.

Another man's suicide is attributed to unrequited love. He desired a certain woman for his wife; but she rejected his suit, and, perhaps, bestowed her affections elsewhere. So he must needs kill himself, because life is not worth living without her. Romantic literature has abounded in examples of this kind; and they have not seldom been regarded as touching and beautiful signs of devotion. But reason and common sense and true spiritual insight render a different verdict. There is no genuine affection in such sentimental passion. True love seeks, above all else, the happiness of the one beloved, and would never urge her to an alliance which is not clearly and fully acceptable in her eyes. The desire of possessing her merely for one's own gratification is the love of self, undisguised and unmitigated. "Love truly conjugial," says Swedenborg, "is with those only who long after wisdom, and thence progress more and more into it." (C. L. 98.) Its chief characteristic is a "sweet reasonableness," which seeks only a union of minds that is spontaneous and natural. As far removed is it as possible from the frenzy in which a man takes his life because his transient wishes are disappointed.

Two lamentable elements would seem to be involved in almost every suicidal act. They are, unbelief in a future life, and a total lack of trust in the Divine Providence. It is hardly possible to think that a man who felt really assured that, when his present state of existence was ended, another would open before him, could deliberately choose to pass from one to the other by so bloody and horrible a path. Such a choice implies the closing of the whole spiritual mind, and a desperate clinging to the fallacious appearance that the death of the body is the extinction of all life. At the very least, there is a blind and reckless disregard of all possible consequences.

Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery,
Swift to be hurled —
Anywhere, anywhere,
Out of the world.

A pitiful state it is, swarming with malicious and deceiving spirits, who love to magnify every seeming ill of this life, and to convert the future into endless blank oblivion.

The absence of all trust in Providence is only too strikingly apparent. Such trust is necessarily grounded in a recognition of God's laws and in the effort to observe them. There is no more defiant breaker of these laws than the suicide. He says in effect, "The Lord does not provide for me; I will take matters into my own hands. There is no Divine care of the universe; if there were, I should not be as I am." And so he takes the fatal plunge, or swallows the deadly poison. Again we say, how pitiful!

Love, by harsh evidence,
Thrown from its eminence;
Even God's Providence
Seeming estranged.

It is an important and interesting inquiry in connection with this subject, to what extent the commission, and especially the increase, of suicides may be due to the general state of society. We know that, so far as any particular evil is prevalent in a community, it cannot be wholly ascribed to the eccentricities of the individuals committing it, but must find some favoring influence in the moral and spiritual atmosphere which all men breathe. We cannot be mistaken in supposing that the suicidal tendency will be fostered by the absence of positive religious faith, and that, conversely, it will grow weaker, in proportion as men really believe that death is the continuation of life, and that "the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." I have no doubt that statistics will confirm this opinion, and that those countries of Europe where suicide most abounds, will prove to be most lacking in the vital elements of a true Christianity.

One sure sign of a decadence of Christian influence is a loss of the sense of moral responsibility. And this seems to

be eminently characteristic of suicide. May it not also be regarded as a peculiar danger of our time? I have often thought of late years that there was a growing obscurity in the minds of men as to the radical distinction between good and evil, with a corresponding disposition to consider the latter only a species of misfortune, to which some unlucky ones are subject, but which others happily escape. An illustration of this tendency may be found in the changed attitude of those who are most active in the temperance reform. Time was, not very long ago, when the principal efforts were directed to the drunkard himself, with the view of leading him to see the error of his ways, and, with the Lord's help, to "go and sin no more." But now the drunkard is hardly regarded as a sinner. He is merely the unfortunate victim of his own appetites, and of the machinations of others. The real criminal is the man who sells the liquor, not he who drinks it. This change of venue, to borrow a legal phrase, is radical. I say nothing in favor of a trade which has no better object than that of catering to dangerous appetites. But is it not evident that a public sentiment which transfers the guilt of an evil from him who commits it to him who simply offers the opportunity for committing it, strikes a terrible blow at the first principles of common morality? Must it not be true that, so far as such sentiments prevail, the sense of personal responsibility, so essential to the orderly relationship between man and his God, is seriously weakened? Any social atmosphere charged with this feeling, is obviously favorable to suicide. The man who, by his own folly or negligence, his own utter absorption in the things of this world, or his own predominating selfishness, has fallen so low as to meditate self-murder, has a fine excuse, if he believes that the world around him will regard the deed only as the climax of a series of calamities, whereof he is the hapless victim. There is but a narrow step between such morbid sentimentality and undisguised fatalism.

The plea of temporary insanity in connection with suicide, opens a large subject on which I cannot now enter. Before reaching any conclusions about the matter, it would be neces-

sary to decide how far insanity itself is due to causes for which man is responsible, and which lie within his control. In the catalogue of things which proceed from the heart of man and defile him, the Lord mentions first "evil thoughts." Suffice it to say that one who wilfully indulges such thoughts invites the devils to approach with influences which will distort his judgment, pervert his reason, darken all the true issues of life, and persuade him that in his case almost any sin is justified.

Boston, Mass. JAMES REED.

DO THOU THY WILL.

Do Thou thy will with me!
I am convinced that thy mysterious ways
Lead ever up to goals of peace. I see
In looking back o'er discontented days
When I rebelled at paths Thou led'st me in—
I see how for my good it all has been.
Do Thou thy will.

Do Thou thy will. I find
That when I wept because some barrier stood
Between me and my longings, I was blind;
For Thou had'st placed it there for my own good;
And when in chosen paths I could not go
It was to guard me from some needless woe.
Do Thou thy will.

Do Thou thy will. I feel
The calm of realms toward which my feet are led
Across my fevered, restless spirit steal,
The blind rebellion of my heart is dead.
Or in the valley or on heights above
The hand that leads me is the hand of *Love*.
Do Thou thy will.

—*Ella Wheeler Wilcox in the Independent.*

THE PHILOSOPHY OF SWEDENBORG.

I.

TERMS WITH NEW MEANINGS: SPIRITUAL INFLUX.

He who is under the influence of faith is not prohibited from thinking and speaking as the learned do in the world; but then he must be guided by this principle that he believe the Word of the Lord, and confirm spiritual and celestial truths by natural truths, in terms familiar to the learned world, as far as lies in his power. (A. C. 129.)

Although Swedenborg's philosophy has been nearly a century and a half before the world (I mean, that of his theological writings), there is no system so little known and understood. In history it stands uncriticized as a system of pneumatology, mysticism, and dogmatism. Nor is this the fault of the philosophers. Kant tried fairly to know it, and for that purpose bought the "Arcana," but it seemed to him a wild, but wonderfully consistent "Dream of a Ghost-seer." Swedenborg's phraseology itself, although undoubtedly the best and most fitting for its purpose, is not at the present time the most suitable for the metaphysician. Justice therefore to the philosophical world demands adaptation to the current modes of metaphysical expression. Through lack of this adaptation a false idea concerning revealed truth in regard to knowing and being has been kept alive to the great detriment of human thought.

Let us take, for instance, the word "ultimate," so very common in Swedenborg's writings. The general reader will be apt to give it an exactly opposite signification to the one intended. He will understand it to mean the point where human knowledge terminates, instead of the termination of a chain of cause and effect from the first substance.

In metaphysics, again, the term used to express that which exists out of all necessary relation is the absolute. It is, therefore, perfectly permissible to use the term when we wish to express to others what Swedenborg speaks of as "the one

only substance from which all things besides are formations" (A. C. 7270); or the "pure intellectual truth which is above all appearances," and not to be perceived by men or angels — the unknowable being a not uncommon synonym of the absolute. No doubt such an attempted adaptation of Swedenborg's philosophy to others may tend to place it in an aspect strange and dubious to many who accept his teachings, and might be deprecated, if an expressed Divine permission did not come to the aid of common sense in the matter.

But not only is there a variation from general usage in the meanings of important terms, but a varying signification is given to them by Swedenborg himself. This results from the new principles and doctrines which necessitate their use in conveying what is involved. Thus whilst the unquestioned truth is stated that there is no ratio between the Infinite and the finite, we find it also stated that God in creating the universe made it more and more finite — an expression which has no meaning outside of Swedenborg's revelations. He affirms as uncompromisingly as Spinoza the existence of one only Substance or Being who is God; but he also speaks of gradations of reality in that which at bottom is all appearance — of matter as being a covering over spirit which diminishes its reality; and moreover that there are appearances which are altogether real, and appearances altogether unreal.

Now there is no great difficulty in understanding what Swedenborg means here, however paradoxical may appear his phraseology. If God be considered the absolute and infinite reality, and creation a succession of distinct representative coverings — the natural world being the last and lowest — and each succeeding plane a step further in representation from absolute being; then it becomes plain how the successive stages of descent are more and more finite, and more and more unreal, dead, or inert.

The above does not indicate any lack of definiteness or consistency on the part of Swedenborg, but simply that the terms he employs are sufficiently elastic to express principles hitherto unperceived, and to which no other terms would apply as well. For throughout all his writings there is strict

definiteness in the lines of demarkation between truth and error; and at the same time comprehensiveness in showing the multiform aspect of truth as seen from different points of view.

In our collateral writings, however, the imperfection of human intelligence not infrequently displays itself by the stress laid upon one of these conditions to the exclusion of the other; so that on the one side we have, as the result of a supposed supreme regard for truth, a rigid formulation which obstructs progress; whilst on the other side, from a believed predominant regard for the good of charity, inconsistencies and contrarieties of statement are looked upon as admissible when coming from different persons, upon the ground — which no one questions — that none can lay claim to the exclusive possession of truth.

It ought to be noted that whilst reality decreases with every stage of removal from the first plane of creation, it is no less true that the outer planes contain all the inner planes with their potencies. Hence we may consider matter under two distinct and altogether different aspects — one being its existence as combination of all which goes to form it; and the other its existence as matter proper — or the final discrete "radiant belt" proceeding from the spiritual sun. It is in this latter sense that matter is to be looked upon as less real than the substances which go to form the spiritual world. So the mere sense of the letter of the Word is less real or genuine than the spiritual sense; nevertheless, when taken with all it contains the whole Word is therein "in its fulness, sanctity, and power," and the spiritual sense could not subsist without it.

The men of our earth bear a similar relation to the men of all other earths or "the grand man of heaven" (E. U. 122), that the literal sense of the Word bears to the interior senses. Taken in their isolated correspondence they are of all men the lowest, but when the interior planes operate in the exclusion of all that is degrading in the natural, they rise with greater ease than others into the highest or most interior planes of being, showing that the characteristics of universal

humanity are with them "in fulness and power" (*see* S. D. 1531). The men of our earth alone cultivate the physical sciences; all of which are too gross and unspiritual to be thought worthy of study by the men of other earths, and hence from them are chosen those "spiritual fishermen" who are sent forth in the other world "to serve as ministers in instructing others." And as all the interior senses of the Word have their ultimation in the letter, and as "the inhabitants and spirits of our earth in the grand man of heaven relate to the natural and external sense, which is the ultimate wherein the interiors of life terminate, and where they rest on their common basis" — in like manner the whole fabric of the spiritual world rests upon the material universe, which is thus an eternal fact. In the heavens the spheres emanating from the angels operate upon their surroundings which are instantaneously plastic to their influence, and so by correspondential forms they image him from whom the sphere emanates. And in the inmost heavens the objective surroundings of the angels so far transcend the inertness of our measurable and fixed time, space, and matter, that they "seem as it were to laugh, sport, and live." (H. H. 489.)

The conceptions of within and without as derived from the natural idea of space must be transcended in thought if we would rightly understand what is meant by the interior and exterior planes of creation. God is infinite and, therefore, the sphere proceeding from Him in creation could not go beyond Him. That which is less finite in creation contains within it that which is more finite — the latter being a plane exterior to those of which it is within. We are within God inasmuch as He is infinite and we finite; and we are outside of Him from the fact that we are not a part of His being, but totally distinct. But, like all human or finite conceptions, those of within and without, greater or less, or even of difference, as we conceive of difference, are only true in a relative sense. Absolutely, or in that "pure, intellectual truth which is above all appearances," there is nothing to which such terms can be applied. As Swedenborg remarks, deny that there is that which can be considered nothingness, and con-

ceive of the substantial ground-work of all things as existing at an unextended point, and these relative ideas of ours will prove themselves to be not the absolute truth of things, but simply their appearances to us. (D. L. W. 81.)

Objection will be made to the New-Church philosophy upon the ground that it goes for the explanation of natural phenomena to a realm above nature, and consequently that it postulates something of which there can be no verification. In this case, however, the objection does not hold good, because the supernatural realm of causation is shown to be intelligible and consistent with natural experience, in which it is shown to be imaged, and it does not preclude continued investigation, explication, or development. Indeed to deny that this world may be only a world of effects is plainly unwise, so long as the fact of causation cannot be proved to exist in it; and consequently to look for it in a realm above where it may exist, is surely the only wisdom. The different degrees of the human mind correspond to the planes of creation, and causation as a fact descending through realms above nature down into nature and manifesting itself there, man's ideas concerning it are simply the results of its operation flowing down from above into perception. And as all truth comes from above, he who utters it does no more than transmit it to others in a degraded state; for it of necessity came to him purer and truer than it issued from him. The desire that aught that we do should be considered meritorious is, therefore, as insane as it is evil.

Unless we keep steadily in view the truth that God sustains all things according to the order in which He created them, we can never arrive at the solution of the problems of the universe. But it has been maintained that the holding of this as a principle would put an end to philosophy by making a dogma the beginning and end of all investigation. In regard to the constancy of creation the philosophy of Descartes is at one with that of the New Church, and hence Swedenborg speaks favorably of the Cartesian doctrine of Occasionalism. (I. S. B.) But Descartes's great error and the stumbling-block of all philosophy that nothing relating to extension

can be predicated of spirit, renders communication between mind and matter apparently impossible; whilst the difficulty is swept away by the New-Church doctrine that thought extends itself independently of space, and that material extension is spiritual extensiveness representatively reflected from an inert ground of reaction.

As it is possible for the reader of Swedenborg's tract on Influx to misapprehend the Cartesian Occasionalism from the statements there given, a brief statement from Sir William Hamilton may not be without use:

> The hypothesis of Divine Assistance or of Occasional Causes, sets out from the apparent impossibility, involved in Dualism, of any actual communication between a spiritual and a material substance — that is, between extended and non-extended existences; and it terminates in the assertion that the Deity, on occasion of the affections of matter — of the motions of the bodily organism, excites in the mind correspondent thoughts and representations; and on occasion of thoughts or representations arising in the mind, that He, in like manner, produces the correspondent movements in the body. But more explicitly [as Laromiguière remarks,] "God, according to the advocates of this scheme, governs the universe, and its constituent existences, by the laws according to which He has created them; and as the world was originally called into being by a mere fiat of the Divine will, so it owes the continuance of its existence from moment to moment only to the unremitted perseverance of the same volition. Let the sustaining energy of the Divine will cease, but for an instant, and the universe lapses into nothingness. The existence of created things is thus exclusively maintained by a creation, as it were, incessantly renewed. God is thus the necessary cause of every modification of body, and of every modification of mind; and his efficiency is sufficient to afford an explanation of the union and intercourse of extended and unextended substances."
>
> This hypothesis did not satisfy Leibnitz. "He reproaches the Cartesians," [says Laromiguière,] "with converting the universe into a perpetual miracle, and of explaining the natural, by a supernatural, order. This would annihilate philosophy; for philosophy consists in the investigation and discovery of the second causes which produce the various phenomena of the universe.

You degrade the Divinity," [he subjoined,] "you make him act like a watchmaker, who, having constructed a timepiece, would still be obliged himself to turn the hands to make it mark the hours. A skilful mechanist would so frame his clock, that it would go for a certain period without assistance or interposition. So, when God created man, he disposed his organs and faculties in such a manner that they are able, of themselves, to execute their functions and maintain their activity from birth to death."

The misapprehension to which I allude would naturally arise from the fact that whilst the Cartesians were referring all reciprocity of organic change and mental determination to Divine agency, Swedenborg apparently objects that whilst they acknowledge the soul to act upon the body (the truth being that they held this to be impossible), they did not at the same time refer the influx from the soul into the body as originating from a Divine Fountain into the soul. His words are:

The spiritual influx hitherto treated of by writers of acute genius, is the influx from the soul into the body, and not any influx into the soul, and through that into the body. . . . Spiritual influx has hitherto been deduced from the soul into the body, but not from God into the soul and thus into the body. (Influx, 8, 18.)

If the tract on Influx was written, as has been supposed, in answer to a letter from Kant, it can hardly otherwise than appear providential that the latter did not receive it from Swedenborg. For Kant would naturally confound Swedenborg's literal statements with the revealed truth which they contain. Swedenborg begins his tract with saying:

1. There are three opinions and traditions, which are hypotheses, concerning the intercourse between the soul and the body, or concerning the operation of one upon the other, and of one with the other; the first is that of physical influx, the second is that of spiritual influx, and the third is that of preëstablished harmony. . . . Besides these three opinions concerning the intercourse between the soul and the body, a fourth cannot be given, for either the soul must operate on the body, or the body on the soul, or both continually together.

Here as indeed all through his writings — the Tulkists to the contrary notwithstanding — he recognizes the existence of body as an actual, and not merely an ideal, representative fact. That another hypothesis of natural dualism has been propounded, does not if it be rightly considered invalidate what Swedenborg says.

> This hypothesis is that of a plastic medium between the soul and body. . . . This medium participates of the two natures; it is partly material, partly spiritual. As material, it can be acted on by the body; and as spiritual, it can act upon the mind. It is the middle term of a continuous proportion. It is a bridge thrown over an abyss which separates matter from spirit. This hypothesis is too absurd for refutation; it annihilates itself. Between an extended and unextended substance, there can be no middle existence. [These being not simply different in degree, but contradictory.] If the medium be neither body nor soul, it is a chimera; if it is at once body and soul, it is contradictory; or if, to avoid the contradiction, it is said to be, like us, the union of soul and body, it is itself in want of a medium. (*Laromiguière; trans. by Hamilton.*)

Philadelphia, Pa. WM. DENOVAN.

YOU want to be true, and you are trying to be. Learn these two things — never to be discouraged because good things get on slowly here, and never to fail daily to do that good which lies next to your hand. Do not be in a hurry, but be diligent. Enter into that sublime patience of the Lord. Be charitable in view of it. God can afford to wait; why cannot we, since we have Him to fall back upon? Let Patience have her perfect work, and bring forth her celestial fruits. Trust to God to weave your thread into the great web, though the pattern shows it not yet. — *George Macdonald.*

WORK.

For there is a perennial nobleness, and even sacredness, in work. Were he never so benighted, forgetful of his high calling, there is always hope in a man that actually works; in idleness alone, is there perpetual despair. — *Carlyle.*

YES! let us work; no task
  Too low, and none too great,
To test our strength, or mask
  God's laws of government.

In undivided strife to give
  Each faculty; the hand
That executes, th' obedient ear,
  That hears, the stern command.

The sheltering arms, — the feet
  So beautiful on mountains!
Disdaining wounds, — to greet
  The coming penitent.

Yet more, the lofty piercing eye
  That sees the Infinite!
The will, — the mighty human power
  Inborn by doing right.

Labor for life? O grand
  And great antithesis! Death
Gives a birth! — comes a command,
  And, clothed anew, we gain a Paradise!

Lord Jesus! make me strong,
To labor 'gainst the wrong,
    I find within.

"Wages of sin is death."
Toiling till my last breath,
    Oh! make me clean.

— *Anonymous.*

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS OF DR. J. J. G. WILKINSON.

III.

SPRING.

April 16, 1869.

Do you know what it is to have so many small things urgent round you as to give an impression of bewilderment, and positive trouble? None of them very sad or very serious, but a too great sense of their great multitude and their buzz? If you do, that then is my case; and the weather lends itself as master of the ceremonies of worry to the imp-legions.

Yet are not bits of the English spring lovely? Today there is a cruel grin of winter again; but the day before yesterday, and two days before that, it seemed as if every tree ran and ran over in branch, in bud, and just-born leaf, with gold. Gold whose fruitful warmth, like a living thing, was in itself.

And yet these affluences of seasons are not so good for us weather-paupers. The blood riots and is unseemly with them, and one puts the experience about them generally into the old understanding against gifts. Hard-earned farthings of sunshine, and dry crusts of climate appear to build up the work-day man most securely. I believe I am suffering from a glimpse of prettier weather than belongs to me.

CHURCH REFORM.

April 24, 1869.

Your letter did me good, though as I approach by the inevitable railway of the days — the end of days — I seem, perhaps, contradictiously, but I hope not unholily to repudiate looking to the world beyond as a present end; and to regard the earth, and the world upon it, and their proximate fates, as the dear object of present life. So I seem to want no farther emancipation than is implied in a firmer will for active good, and a livelier faith in its speed and certainty; in a coming of all Divine and natural Gospels; and in a repeal of all artifices of laws, in disendowment and disestablishment universal; as a clearance allowing the establishment of the Lord's Divine natural kingdom in humanity.

The rest is sure to come, and the millionfold deaths which are to bring us to it, are all commissioned clock-work, and keep time on the walls of heaven.

This week I am delighted with the unbinding of the human infant in these realms.

Women are some day to hold their own, and are not to be mere paddocks for donkey men to graze and tread in. And men are to be disassinized by finding that the State regards them as the mates of free wills, not the tramplers of human turf.

And another dire little artifice of ecclesiastical tyranny is to be broken into some day and the prisoners are to be let out. Men and women are to be free to marry wherever our common human instinct does not revolt at it. The great argument that the wife's sister, by her forced legal incompatibility with her brother-in-law is sacred in the house, requires for its carrying out that a man should be incapable of marrying his governess, his cook, his housemaid, monthly and sick nurse, and any one who is an inmate; for their sacredness is as desirable as the wife's sister's.

What a great eloquence of plain, good sense was John Bright's on these points.

By the way, was not the £400 which led to the Norwich murder Mrs. Sheedard's property? And was not brother Sheedard's legal privilege the tap root of the madness which animated his razor?

You see I am a political creature today.

WOMAN.

April 26, 1869.

Who on this earth yet knows what a woman is; still less, what woman collective is! All arguments about her social future assume that she is and will be, a poor imitation of man — his ape. I suppose, in the absence of Freedom, and its first child, Experiment, it is only a supposition, that in social life she will differ from him as much as her voice differs from his in music, and her frame in the service of love, and her heart and mind in the affections that hold and produce the race, and the home-making that enshrines it.

Her education, her rights of property, her citizenship, and suffrage, will diverge from his from the day that her social life is born, until it is seen that a new being, a woman undreamt of, with wants and attributes, and realizations undreamt of, has been created by the Redeemer, on the infinite space of freedom, and by the infinite forces of Divine experiment; which all men and women will be immortal in carrying out.

At present, in all social and public life, woman is basely mas-

culine, male man's monkey; she will become feminine when she enters the state, and opens forth in it, as herself.

A SAGA.

MAY 15, 1869.

I little know where my autumn vacation may be spent. . . . . I find as a rule I get more utter change — not pleasure — in going abroad, generally on the sea, and to places where I am beyond the reach of professional summons. But I know not what a month may bring forth.

I can ask with Sigurd in Edda, "What shall next be of my life?" And so can we all. But the question drops into that abyss of which God only has the plummet.

I am reading Magnusson's Translation of the "Saga of Grettir the Strong." Iwish you could read it; I should like to hear your lament over it. But you would appreciate the tellling of the Saga. And the men who have taught us telling, have been, so far, the word's pioneers, whatever they may have told about.

CHANGES.

JUNE 4, 1869.

Thus —— —— is constantly on the field of the old monarchs and anarchs, doing battle for liberty, and winning inches of the old world for the new world.

It has to be conquered inch by inch, has it not? Only that at length the inches are more swiftly traversed; and at last the Sun seems to occupy the kingdom of night in one moment of rays; but then we forget the slow inches from the West to the East.

So in the morning of righteousness, with all its infinite facility, and faculty, we shall forget the long night of difficulties that bred themselves and the darkness.

Lately I have been interested with the thought-movement about our patent laws. Interested mainly because I see that the institution of property is ever on its trial; and to each arraignment has little to say, and makes its barristers all talk nonsense. There is no difference in essence between claims to have and to hold which society makes, whether they are Arkwrights's inventions, Dickens's novels, Rothschild's money, the Queen's crown, or the Marquis of Westminster's estates. They are all human ordinances, presumably *pro bono publico*; they can all be meddled with *pro bono publico*. Ultimately they will be the most plastic of all things, though now they are the very stiffest.

Ask Westminster for the acre under Covent Garden, and now he will sooner yield you his two legs. Ask the future Westminster, the true marquis who is to come and he will say, "Whoso wants it more than I, his it is. Prove your case by Christ and take."

JULY 17, 1869.

Feeling so hurried today, I know not what to say. I feel driven and voiceless. Long distances and setting my house in order, as I do every quarter, have eaten me up. Yet I am alive with sympathy for all the great current of things, and the Niagaras of events which are thundering down past us.

I cannot say that I often "feel as if life and effort were wasted," but that is because in the strong stream I rather by necessity look ahead than reflect and conscienceize.

INSPIRATION.

JUNE 28, 1869.

How instantaneously I sympathize with what you say about "Improvisations." The draft upon one's gifts is not equal of course; possibly, in no way coincident with the works of will and power. May be it would in many destroy, in many blur the actions of the personal mind. It is a process in such case to be feared — an instructive fear, often wholesome and heaven-bestowed, breeds in the next stage dislike.

Yet I would not have been without my improvisation experiences; and I could not be happy without the occasional visitation of them now. They have taught me much of influx and its wonderful ways and laws; much of the resources, much of the source and mystery of first thoughts — much of the vast contents of such thoughts — and how when they are covered up by conscious workings and personal efforts and vainness of expression, the early drift is quite gone, the meaning quite earthy and barren, and the attribution to self quite justified by the comparatively worthless product.

They have taught me by shadows and small lights what inspiration is; and that it is quite different from genius, from art, from all voluntary talent.

This last lesson I could wish that all the world had, in order that the great things of God might never be measured by the little things of self. For if influx, be it in the merest sprays and powders of its own fluid, were personally known, scientific criticism

would keep away from the grand Word of its influx, and only criticism of what good the Word is to us — subject to a precedent criticism as to our own worthiness, would take reverent action in the case.

DOCTRINES.

JULY 6, 1869.

To day the weather is heavy and sultry; and no spark passes from heaven to earth in the natural degree. But the roll, and the roar, and the flash may come, and afterwards the leisure of invigorating lightness.

I quite harmonize with all you say about head doctrines, however big, being small. "They who do the works shall know of the Doctrine." Social doing flowing out of the heart of social good, is the condition and the organ of the new understanding. Atheism, and materialism, and scepticism are but the worms that prey upon the dead carcass of head doctrines which belongs to the worms; they do not corrode one fibre of the new heart of Christ in the race. They will be the earliest converts to universal good; the first and uttermost slaves to the universal love.

HOUSES.

JULY 19, 1869.

On Saturday my wife and I went to East Sheen, to see Mr. Edwin Chadwick's model cottage, made of straw, iron, and concrete; the first attempt of science at absolutely dry dwellings — each brick of our houses, in wet weather, will hold a pound of water. I liked Chadwick's materialism, thus strict to the service of good.

There is no sphere which the revolution and the reformation cannot reach; no disease, or decay, which cannot be attacked and defeated, by a line of health trenches sufficiently large round it, and gradually closing in upon it. The science of the command of particulars by generals — the art of that science is the human meeting the Divine redemption. Often they do not meet; yet after much sulkiness and even combat on the human side, they are meant to meet and to marry.

DISESTABLISHMENT.

JULY 24, 1869.

And so you see the Irish State Church has come to its end amidst the good feeling of all the great and the little folks. I do

hope that evil melts away in this old land; that it is made of mist, not rock; and that blasting will not be needful even when greater blocks than this have to come down.

INTEGERS AND COEFFICIENTS.

II.

3. *Environment.* A word comparatively new in the philosophy of the world, though familiar for a century under the term sphere and efflux to the New Church. We have no more potent exponent in the life of man. Neither of the other four exponents which we endeavor to bring before the reader can be considered as one half or one third as potent as this one. Environment is in some characters and in some lives so tremendous in its influences for evil or for good, mostly the former, that the will and the understanding themselves are as nothing compared to this one factor. Of environment we might make the usual catalogue of philosopy, and divide into the physical, the moral, etc. But we refrain and divide into the series — pleasant, neutral, and unpleasant. The pleasant we should suffer to include every thing that pleasantly affects man, whether in itself good or bad. The neutral we should call such a thing as leaves man just what he was before it exerted its influence, whether the thing in itself be good or bad. And unpleasant would include all such influences or objects which induce upon man such states as are derogatory to his moral or his spiritual progress or nature, whether the influences in themselves be good or bad. Thus, for instance, a decayed apple is in itself an object that we would call either useless or offensive, yet when it touched the sensories of the poet Schiller, he produced his most soul-stirring poetry. Some great thinkers have claimed and still claim, that much of their ability to work depends upon the use of tobacco in some form. We know that tobacco is a poison and that its influence upon the physical frame in the long run is not a desirable one, yet we have here a result ascribed to it that could not be considered as in any way evil. But

the same results can be attained by others without the narcotic. The same line of argument would go and does go far toward excusing the use of any narcotic, from the vilest of absynthe to the mildest of teas. They are material substances which in themselves are evil, from which, however, men claim to derive beneficial influences.

Again we find that things in themselves good, influence men in evil ways. Meditation upon spiritual matters is not an evil thing, yet men have gone mad through such meditation. Prayer in itself is not at all an evil thing — in fact, it is a very necessary task of daily life and service in the Divine — yet there are prayers which are of very doubtful value in spiritual progress. We would see, for instance, in a Latin prayer uttered by an individual ignorant of the language, rather a neutral piece of environment, of no harm, perhaps, but also of decidedly little use. Again, music in itself is a noble thing, and the breathing of angels on the earth, yet not every ear can hear or understand what Wagner means in his "Feuerzauber," or Schumann in his "Warum," or Beethoven in his "Opus, 90."

Two laws are deducible from this series of considerations. The first is, that the thing itself and the influence it has upon man are two distinct and different factors. It matters not whether a thing be good or bad, right or wrong in itself, the influence it has upon the character of man must be decided not by a fixed standard of the relative merit of the thing itself, but upon the condition of the man subjected to its influence. Environment in itself is nothing; only in so far as it influences the man, does it become something. Only in so far as it leaves its traces upon his spirit is it a reality to him. The pleasant, the neutral, the unpleasant are therefore relative terms. An accident, a pleasure, a failure, a success, wealth, poverty, health, disease, are relative terms. They express nothing if not gauged by the standard of the individual. An accident that teaches trust in God, and an accident that teaches defiance of God, may be one and the same accident, and they are correspondingly good or evil, according to the influence they exert upon the living soul in man. Again the

same series of environment will produce distinctly different effects in the same mind. In a storm the same sailor, in despair of life, will curse and pray in the same breath, and do one as devoutly as the other. The young student of medicine who goes to the dissecting-table for the first time has sensations quite different from those which he will have when he has become demonstrator of anatomy in his *alma mater*. The environment has not changed one iota, but the state of the man has changed.

Therefore in making allowance for the influence of environment, we are amazed sometimes by the erroneous deductions made by writers upon these subjects from the neglect of this law. They will, for instance, describe a den in which tobacco smoke and the reeking breath of liquor and the profanity of the talkers — all three together — make a mass thick enough to cut with a knife. They will then describe the impression this makes upon them as they enter. This we admit as true. They will then go to moralizing upon the depravity of the frequenters of the den. This we admit. Finally, they go to moralizing upon the influences of such environment upon the men and women gathered there, and in doing so they will transfer their own impressions to the men. This we do not admit. The environment of the den does not influence the *habitués* of the den as the occasional visitor thinks it does. It has the same influence upon the man exactly, as the library has upon the student, as the barn has upon the hostler, as the roar of the cotton-mill has upon the operative, as the murmur of the sea has upon the longshoreman, as the rattle of the engine has upon the stoker, as the click of the ticker has upon the broker, as the smell of the new hay has upon the farmer. The senses and the faculties become dulled to it, and it loses its influence upon the man. It is the soil in which he grows; it is the background upon which he is painted; but his spiritual development uses this part of the environment only as a basis upon which to rest, and it never becomes part of the man as a spiritual being, unless his attention is repeatedly called to it, and his consciousness of it made keen by comparison or by explanation.

It is utterly unadvisable if not false to attribute to environment the influences which it is said to have, and to forget that there must be a condition of mind or body receptive of that influence before it can be exerted. Given an environment of any kind, therefore, the true study of human life first finds whether there be in the nature, mind, or character of man, a sphere or set of faculties responsive to it. Before this can be found the environment must be regarded as not existing. In the study of environment the evil or the good of the environment itself must be kept thoroughly distinct from the influence of the environment upon man. Thus we teach men in regard to spiritual things that an evil man might go to heaven and find it a place not at all to his liking. Why? Because he lacks the finer sensibilities which will move responsive to the influences of surroundings. In the same way the influences which an angel could feel from infernal environments could not be taken at all as a standard of what the demon would feel in the same. In fact so distinct and so clear is this thought in Swedenborg generally, that we can readily understand him when he says that to certain ones certain ways appear which will lead them to societies of their own nature, and that other ways, although they exist, do not appear to them. We should not hesitate to apply this law to earth and remember that in the entire environment of man there are only certain things which influence him at all, and they influence him differently at different times, and different characters in different ways. We give to environment, therefore, an influence only when coupled with a receptive faculty on the part of the individual. In natural things we see this in the fact that certain men can go into an infected district and remain there with no danger of infection, while others will immediately be attacked. Why? These men breathe the same miasmas, and breathe them in the same quantities. In some the spores of disease find membrane soil upon which to grow; in the others they do not. Hence such a district is dangerous only to those who are open to the danger. Hence the conclusion that callousness to surroundings, familiarity with environments, whether they be of good or evil nature

in themselves, deprives them of the perilous element, which makes them dangerous to novitiates, and leaves such environment simply the vehicle of the will or the permission of God. We could dwell upon this point for hours if we desired to bring it out in its fulness.

The second point is the tendency of the philosopher to separate the man and his environment, not only in regard to the influence of the environment on the man, but also in regard to the relative value of the environment to the man. This we cannot admit at all. The environment and the man are to be regarded as one and the same factor. We frequently hear the phrase, "If the circumstances had only been different!" Ah! There is the point we cannot for one instant admit. Look at it in this light. Your little one is at work upon a problem in mathematics. He has tried it and failed several times. He comes to you with the complaint, "If only that four was a seven, then I could do it." You smile. You tell him, "But the four is a four. It is not a seven, and it was not intended for a seven. If it were a seven, the example would be a different one from the one intended." He shakes his little head, the lip quivers, and he goes at it again. So the Great Teacher, when He sets His children to solve problems, knows what figures he wants to use. He knows what is necessary for the solution, so that it may prove of use to the solver. If there be one who has learned that four times six is twenty-four, and he is to learn that nine times seven is sixty-three, why should he expect to find the numbers with which he is already familiar? He will not find them. He will find himself confronted by entirely new environments requiring the putting forth of entirely new faculties. We claim, confidently, that the environment is always of such a nature as to call forth from man that faculty which God wants to see cultivated in him. We therefore admit no "if" into Divine Providence. The question, therefore, never is, "Why could it not be so and so?" but it always is, "Here is a certain character in certain circumstances. What is that character to do in order to learn the eternal lessons involved in the contact of his particular character with that particular

series of circumstances?" The question is never, "What would you do in my place?" There is no answer to such a question, any more than there is an answer to the question, "If three times four were seventeen what would be the dimensions of the Holy City?" Three times four are never seventeen, neither is the character of any one man, multiplied by the environment of that man, ever that of somebody else. This foolish way of comparing headaches, of wishing yourself into somebody else's place, of sighing for somebody else's states or conditions, is sheer folly, and the mind so influenced hopelessly deprives itself of every means of ever solving a life problem.

Take the man and his environment as complementary to one another. If necessary consider them as complementary fractions, that if the man be two-fifths the environment will be the other three-fifths of the combination, and the two together will be the exponent to be placed at the side of the integer in the case given. The man and his environment, the man and his time, the man and his niche, correspond and make one. Think of a Napoleon among the American Indians; of an Edison among the Laplanders; of a Mozart among the Chinese; of a Humboldt among the Patagonians; or tear Luther out of his age and put him into this; transplant Abraham from Hebron to New York City; put Raamses or Menephtha into a vestibuled railroad train, and you have the height of folly illustrated, that severs the man from his environment and tries to make a fraction equal to an integer. The whole is always equal to the sum of all its parts, and sorry work is done whenever the part is taken to represent the whole, and sorrier work still whenever the part is taken as the whole.

Vineland, N. J. ADOLPH ROEDER.

[*To be concluded.*]

CONSOLATION FROM THE IDEA OF GOD.

It ought to be a source of consolation and a constant sense of peace to know that the eternal Father is such as He is; for nothing can be more certain than that such a Father will provide for His children, in the eternal future, abodes and modes of life in which nothing that any heaven-lighted imagination could devise will be wanting.

That there should be such an eternal and higher life is not in itself more improbable than the life we know of and are passing through. If it should be claimed that the promise of heaven is too good to be true, it may be boldly replied, in view of the Divine character, that the highest destiny for man is that which is most probable, and that nothing is too good to be true. Neither is there anything too wonderful to be possible. The spiritual world cannot be much more wonderful than is this world, the very existence of which should constitute a satisfactory proof of the reality of the spiritual world as its source. One order demonstrates the other. Not only is there a parallelism between them, but one could not exist without the other.

This, however, may be said, that though one cannot exist without the other the proportion between the two worlds as to magnitude and population is constantly changing, so that the spiritual world is advancing to such superiority in numbers and power that the natural world is becoming relatively as nothing. Constituting the covering or ultimate of the growing spiritual world it becomes ever relatively less, and more subordinate to the spiritual order.

It should seem possible to live in unbroken peace and contentment in this world with an ever present clear conviction that we who are all so near the gates and so soon to pass them, as those approaching happy homes after a slow and painful pilgrimage, into that normal life where we shall meet in a better land all whom we have loved and lost, or whom we may wish to know, whether of our own times or of those who lived in the earlier ages, finding our delight, however,

mainly in the society of our like. These will be for the most part of our own times and our own world.

It should not be doubted, however, that they to whom it has been given to see universal truths, in whatever world they may be, will desire to meet all who are in similar truths, and thus those in the higher philosophies will have their gatherings from all worlds.

The practical value of an intimate conviction as to the actuality of the new life which is so near should be very great. It should be accompanied by such feelings as one would have if expecting to be summoned in winter to take up our abode in southern climes, and not in southern climes merely, but in the midst of friends and those who in Divine Providence are brought together for mutual benefit.

That this is certain ought not to come into question. The truth is we can only in some small degree form an idea of the life that awaits us in the normal condition of things in the eternal future. The reverse of this Divine order would be, taking into view what has been revealed to us of the aims of God's providence, to the last degree improbable. Without this Divine order the world, and all worlds, would be but as a perishing night-cloud soon lost not only to sight but to fact.

Indeed it should appear from a spiritual point of view that this world has really no existence without God and the future life. There would be for us nothing but despair and death and a total absence of love and light, but for the expectation of eternal life.

The world and all that is in it would be but a baseless fabric without that Divine use which they subserve. Without God and the future life there would not be life here in any true sense. To live the life of a dog or a horse and then to die his death would be only the sad course and fit termination of a non-human existence. It would be to live in a world of shadows, and shadows not of rocks and towers and enduring pyramids, but of the formless and flying clouds driven hither and thither at the mercy of the winds — themselves the sport of a chance blind as eternal night. Benj. G. Smith.*

* Since writing the above, our friend has been called home.

OPEN LETTERS.

THE SINGLE TAX LEAGUE.

Editor of the New-Jerusalem Magazine:—

On page sixty-one of the January number of the Magazine, may be found your notice of the new publication "The New Earth." I wish to express to you my dissent from your view as to what the *Messenger* should have done to meet the requirements of that strangely named body of individuals who style themselves "The New-Churchmen's Single Tax League. The *Messenger* was too broad when it admitted to its columns an advertisement of that organization. The terms broad, and liberal, are getting to cover an immense amount of chaff and iniquity. They are words worn threadbare by Unitarians, Universalists, Agnostics, and by the Infidel world in general. A gentleman who announces himself as a member the of New-York Society of the New Church, is a member of the "The New-Churchmen's Single Tax League," and a year ago, addressed numerous New-Churchmen in different States, inviting them to take, free of cost to them, a copy of Hugh O. Pentecost's publication, "The Twentieth Century;" I was so solicited. Because the gentleman announced himself a New Churchman, as above, the name being a bond of sympathy, and not knowing him, or of him, not knowing Hugh O. Pentecost, or of the character of his publication, I acceded to the courteous request of the said gentleman, and took a copy of "The Twentieth Century." I have had it a year. In the modern use of the words, it is a paper that is broad and liberal in its views; it is a Single Tax publication; its editor in every issue, either directly or by implication denies that there is a God; that there is any good or sufficient reason for believing that man exists as man when he goes out of this world. All religions are spoken of in terms of sarcasm, derision, or contempt; its editor advocates his view of Socialism and Anarchy. It is true many good things are to be found in its columns, yet its tone and teachings are most pernicious. How any good citizen, more strange, still, any New-Churchman, can devote his means, and use his name as New-

Churchman to circulate such literature, is to me one of the marvels of the age. I can only account for it by the fact that there is no law by which a class of minds can be either guided or measured. I am heartily glad that there is a sufficient amount of sound, conservative sense lodged with those who control and direct the columns of the *Messsenger* to prevent its becoming so broad as to be in any degree the mouthpiece of the body, who, with an assurance and egotism unpardonable, has dubbed itself "The New-Churchmen's Single Tax League." I wish a way might be found to compel them to drop the term "New-Churchmen's," then they might go on with their "New Earth," or *to* one, as they might feel inclined, without protest from me.

Mr. Editor, if you had only words of approval sent to you, you might conceive that your readers are all in accord with you in all your expressions. I am simply protesting against your becoming too broad. The New Church should not permit as a body, nor under its name, any meddling with prevalent issues in civil affairs. If they do, they will work its disintegration. I trust a better future lies before it.

Grand Rapids, Mich. GEO. W. THAYER.

SOCIALISM.

Editor of the New-Jerusalem Magazine: —

"A NEW-CHURCHMAN," in an open letter published in the February number of the MAGAZINE, requests me to forward you for publication the letter incidentally referred to in my "Letters to a New-Church Friend," which appeared in your November issue, as an illustration of "the legitimate fruit of looking to outward reforms as a means of building up the kingdom of heaven among men."

The labor reform sheet to which I referred, was entitled "John Swinton's Paper," and the letter in question, which prefaced the gift, was a printed one, apparently cut from a previous issue of that journal. As the clipping was long since destroyed, together with the papers that accompanied and followed it, I can not comply with your correspondent's request. I trust, however, that "A New-Churchman" (of whose personality, by the way, I have no direct and certain knowledge), as the author of the letter, may have a copy of it, and will furnish it to you for publication. I take no offence at the author's implication that he was "wholly

misrepresented," as it is plainly based upon the idea that he was "wholly misunderstood." I am quite confident, however, that a fair and natural interpretation of the language used would fully justify the conclusion reached. If "A New-Churchman" does not hold the views which this letter, together with the implied endorsement of the above-named journal, would seem to indicate, I am very glad. And if upon the publication of the letter, it should appear that any other interpretation of the language used is fairly tenable, and that my statement contained any essential misrepresentation, I shall most cheerfully retract it.

Urbana, Ohio. WILLIAM H. MAYHEW.

THE NEGRO PROBLEM.

Editor of the New-Jerusalem Magazine:—

I DO not think that the current "Race Question" is really a question of honest consciousness of superiority of one race over the other; I think that it is only a manifestation of human nature, as expressed in T. C. R. 754: "The love of self is to wish well to one's self alone, and to no other except for the sake of self." I am of the opinion that the same unregenerate persons who now claim superiority over the negroes and who commit such excesses against them would, if occasion arose and opportunity offered, also treat their own race even worse than they now treat the negroes.

Charleston, S. C. W. J. B.

THE MAGAZINE AND GENERAL CHURCH OF PENNSYLVANIA.

Editor of the New-Jerusalem Magazine:—

AS in *New-Church Life* for January the MAGAZINE has been charged with hostility towards the General Church of Pennsylvania, permit me to inform your readers that I have been over and over again requested by the MAGAZINE to omit sentences and expressions which in my communications appeared antagonistic to the Academy; and this both before and since the disruption of the Society of the Advent. I state my experience so that the MAGAZINE readers may judge of its attitude.

Philadelphia, Pa. WM. DENOVAN.

SWEDENBORG STUDIES.

THE DIARY, VOL. IV.

THE edition of the "Diary," which Mr. James Speirs is bringing out at London, has received a substantial addition in this handsome volume of more than five hundred pages. We have found some fault with the previous volumes because of the errors which disfigured them, and which could only be removed, we believed, by careful editorial work done upon the translation made by Prof. Bush. The present volume is open to no such criticism, indeed the translation seems to be as near perfect as in any of those books which many hands have revised and re-revised. The editor to whom we owe this is Rev. James F. Buss, one of the youngest of our English brethren, who has here given evidence of an unusual gift for this kind of work. In fact, the closing portion of the volume is purely his own translation.

When Mr. Buss took hold of the work he saw at once the need of a preface to state the difference between this and the works published by Swedenborg, which preface had been unfortunately wanting in the previous volumes. But he has done more than explain the fragmentary and in a sense immature character of the *Memorabilia*, he has given us some twenty pages of valuable remarks. He first shows how very imperfect the work of Mr. Bush was. He then points out the place of the "Smaller Diary," as the portion repeating the numbers is called, and he inserts this in its true place, adding an "m" to the numbers. He also speaks of the little diagrams found in the manuscript to indicate the positions and movements incident to the judgment in the other world, and inserts them where they belong. In cases of passages represented by dots in the Tafel edition, Mr. Buss has restored the original. Again, he explains the astronomical signs affixed to the paragraphs in one portion to tell days of the week.

Mr. Buss also discusses the question as to the purpose of this record. He believes that Swedenborg wrote it for his own use only. He shows that the author was learning all the time, indeed, "that his preparation for the later parts of his mission went on concurrently with the actual performance of the earlier parts." An instance is given. He also treats of passages which seem to indicate that hell is only a temporary state, and points out that no published work shows the least doubt on this subject. He regards the "Diary" as a "perfect mine of valuable information," and such it certainly is.

A table of contents is given, but this is not of much use, because the subjects reappear constantly. An index, when the work is completed, will be highly useful.

To speak of some particulars in the translation:

4684m, *axis* is rendered "axle-tree," but axis would be better.

4745m, "sight" should be "light" (*luce*).

4568, for "another life" read "the other life."

4618, instead of "relate to man," read "represent man" (*referunt*).

4642, "they were seen" (*visi*) is rendered "these things were seen."

4722, "mediated" should be "meditated."

5063, *appercepi sanctum ab illis* is rendered "they became conscious of holiness from them," but the meaning seems clearly to be "I perceived," so that the sentence would read, "When I spake with them, etc., I perceived holiness from them."

5078, "*serenus*" is rendered "effective in clearing the atmosphere," which is excessive.

5182, there is an omission of "thus in the good of innocence and in conjugial love."

5188, the dative after *appropriata* should be rendered "to them," not "by them,"

5235, for *visus est* we dislike the change of person to "I have seen."

5272, "I wonder" is needlessly inserted before *num forte.*

5322, "western" is a mistake for "southern."

5407, *se numina* should be "make themselves deities" not "idols for themselves."

5416, should have "ten" for "twelve."

5513a, *ductus sum iterum* is not "I was led a journey" but "again."

5513[3], *satum vis divinæ* rendered "sowing of Divine force" makes one feel that *satum* is not the right word.

5522, *imbuunt* is rendered "imbue," but the meaning is "imbibe."

5534, *ex eo* is too heavily rendered by "from this consideration."

5579, *perplurimis* is rendered fancifully "very, very many."

We have spoken of these points in the fewest possible words, but we mean merely to suggest that some of these are places in which improvement can probably be made. It will be seen at once that the actual error of omission or misunderstanding has been reduced to a minimum. We hope that Mr. Buss will continue his intelligent labors, and that he will in time try his hand upon the *Adversaria*.

SWEDENBORG'S HOME.

Mr. M. Wennman, Director of Swedish Telegraph Service, writes in regard to the place of Swedenborg's residence while doing the most important work of his life:

The place was bought March 26, 1743, from State-Chamberlain Carl Segerlund for 6,000 daler, copper money, representing at present 333 crowns or about $90. Perhaps money was worth then ten times what the same amount would be worth now. This property is recorded to have been put up at auction, March 5, 1772, when it was bought by Bishop Lars Benzelstjerna, the son of Swedenborg's sister. The price was 12,500 daler. Aug. 14, 1773, the property was transferred to Johan Le Moine, manager of the Custom House, who already owned the adjoining property. The property seems to have changed hands in 1815, and Dec. 31, 1857 it was sold to Messrs. Brinck and Dahlgren. In the year 1860, it belonged to Mr. Johan Oberg, and in 1875 to Baron Oxenstierna, who offered to sell it to our Society for $6,000, but this amount could not be obtained. The poplars were cut down in 1879. In

1880 Swedenborg's house was taken down, and its place was first filled with a bakehouse, and then with the present large house.

Although my document is officially attested to be a true copy of the records of the town, yet as Swedenborg did not depart from this life till March 29, 1772, and as my official plan of the ground is dated Aug. 24, 1773, it seems probable that the sale by auction took place in 1773 and not in 1772. The memorial tablet, therefore, reads that this house was possessed by Swedenborg till his death.

NEW INDEX TO THE APOCALYPSE EXPLAINED.

In connection with his new Latin edition of *Apocalypsis Explicata*, Rev. S. H. Worcester prepared an elaborate index of subjects and Scripture passages, and it was published in 1885 by the American Swedenborg Printing and Publishing Society as the sixth volume of the set. Ever since the preparation of this volume Dr. Worcester has been engaged upon such an enlargement of it as would exhibit all the Hebrew and Greek words for which the Latin equivalents occur. When but one equivalent is given the original word could be printed in parenthesis, but in cases where several translations had been given, it was necessary to bring them in by giving all the passages in which they occurred. Thus the work was at least doubled. Added to this we have two summaries of these translations, one of the Hebrew and Greek with their Latin equivalents, the other of the Latin followed by the Hebrew and Greek. This enlarges the original volume of five hundred pages to two volumes of over six hundred pages each. Nothing could be more complete than such an index. It has cost years of severe labor and its pecuniary cost must have been very great, but the result is one which our scholars will always appreciate.

Will you not agree with me that there is one comprehensive Church whose fellowship consists in the desire to purify and ennoble human life, and where the best members of all narrower Churches may call themselves brother and sister in spite of differences.— *George Eliot.*

BOOK NOTICES.

Swedenborg and the Doctrines of the New Church. By Rev. R. L. Tafel, A. M., Ph. D. London: New-Church Educational Institute. 1889. pp. 571.

In 1888 our readers had the pleasure of seeing an instalment of this work, treating of the Second Coming. It would appear that Dr. Tafel extended his preparation till it exceeded the limits of a volume, so that what he has now printed in this handsome book is but a part of what he planned to publish. It is evident that the plan grew upon him, for he has first given four chapters, apparently written for public lectures, on "The Place of Emanuel Swedenborg in the Christian Church," "Conventional ideas about him reviewed," "His preparatory life of science and philosophy," "His inspiration and that of the prophets and evangelists." In these chapters he gives a clear account of the man and his mission. Among the statements which he makes are that for thirteen years after receiving the call to his mission, "he did not open his lips to any of his Stockholm friends about his remarkable spiritual condition," and that for seventeen years no one but his London publisher knew that he was the author of the volumes published before 1760. Dr. Tafel has no hope of the old organizations through creed revision, or the action upon them of their converts from other races, or any other means of help. He believes that people now in them and spiritually of the new age will be at last compelled to leave them, and that they will then have nothing to preserve longer in existence.

After these four chapters we have a series of ten chapters, some of them very short, treating of the leading doctrines in summary form and in Dr. Tafel's own words. He then takes up the subject of Regeneration, and treats of Conscience and other branches of his topic in similar brief statements; but, when he reaches under this head the subject of Spiritual Enlightenment he enters into it fully with long extracts and the extraordinary thoroughness for which he is noted. This part occupies some two hundred pages. A short treatise on the Celestial Man closes the volume.

Dr. Tafel intended this work for ministers and students, but we think that others will read it with interest and benefit.

The Life of Dr. Muhlenberg. By W. W. Newton, D. D. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1890. pp. 267. $1.25.

Dr. Muhlenberg was a prophetic man. His interest was in the things which were in advance of his time. Some of these he saw realized; others have been realized since his death; others await realization; they all connect themselves with his name. Born in 1796 of a noble race, he grew up pure and peace loving. At twenty-one he entered upon ministerial service as an Episcopalian deacon, assisting a rector in Philadelphia. Later he was placed in charge of a parish, and then began upon those practical and self-sacrificing labors which engaged much of his thought. He established a school. Later he was engaged in a similar enterprise with a college in view, but this failed financially. Then he took charge of a church in New York among the poor, and here he developed the daily service and other customs now general among his brethren. One day he took up a collection for a hospital for the poor. It amounted to $30, and he was asked what he meant to do with it. He had a plan and in time St. Luke's was established at a cost of $200,000. Here he made his home and founded a sisterhood of nurses. Finally he undertook St. Johnland, a town after the Christian plan, and there he died.

A memorial which he presented to his Convention praying for freedom in the use of the liturgy and other reforms, especially for active efforts in the direction of the union of churches, was coldly received, but, as Dr. Newton puts it, the Episcopal Church is now on its knees praying for the spirit which Dr. Muhlenberg had. It seems likely that his name will be held in increasing honor, and certainly he is a most worthy subject for a volume in the series of biographies of "American Religious Leaders." It is well to remember the name that he liked, "Evangelical Catholic."

Essays, Doctrinal and Practical. By Fifteen Clergymen. Boston: Universalist Publishing House. 1889. pp. 328.

That gradually emerging line of separation among Christians which ignores all previous divisions and arranges them either as believers in the Lord Jesus, or as disbelievers, would once have placed the Universalists on the positive side. They have been gradually changing till they are now, to judge from this volume,

extremely negative in their Christianity. They certainly rival the Unitarians in their rejection of the Lord, and give one the impression that they wish to present themselves as brethren to be welcomed into the Unitarian body. There used to be many, there must now be not a few Universalists who will read this book with regret.

All is well expressed and shows ample courage. Among the most striking essays are those of Dr. H. W. Thomas, who predicts the utter downfall of the systems recognizing the redemption; of Rev. Henry Blanchard, who most boldly declares that the Scriptures are not inspired, and that there was no miraculous birth at Bethlehem; of Dr. O. Cone who vigorously impugns the allegorical interpretation of the Word, finding fault with the writers of the Gospels for making reference to prophecies as fulfilled; and of Dr. R. Fisk who holds that "Jesus was none other than a man, with human parentage like all of us."

It is not fair to suppose from this that the Golden Rule is rejected, only that redemption is declined.

Religion and Science as Allies. By James Thompson Bixby. Chicago: Chas. H. Kerr & Co. 1889. pp. 226. In paper, 30 cents.

In treating so worn a theme, Mr. Bixby has shown some courage, but he had good reason to print his lectures in the clearness of his reasoning and in his thorough acquaintance with scientific authors. He speaks first of the hurtful antagonism of the two, shows that there is no need of it, regards it as due mainly to ignorance on each side of its own field and of the other's, rejects religious claim to exclusive knowledge, criticizes science for the same fault, declares that similar methods should be employed by each on its own plane, shows the method of verification to be employed by each, and concludes with the hope that the two may in time learn to love each other.

If Mr. Bixby would say theology where he now says religion, and would limit theology to what is justly called natural, it would be better. As it is he seems to cover the whole ground when he only approaches it, or rather shuts himself from it by declaring against Scripture and the Divine Saviour. It is on this side that he is weak. A truer and larger theology will also love science, but it does not rise from below but descends from above. In his eagerness to lower the Scripture, he makes the mistake of saying

that "the Books," *ta biblia*, is the original and proper name. It is the Septuagint name. "Law and Prophets" is the original and more expressive name.

UNITARIANISM: ITS ORIGIN AND HISTORY. A Course of Lectures. Boston: American Unitarian Association. 1890. pp. 394. $1.00.

THIS handsome volume contains sixteen lectures delivered in Chauncey Hall, Boston, with the following subjects: Early Christian Doctrine, by Rev. J. H. Allen; Christianity from the fifth to the fifteenth century, by Rev. A. P. Peabody; Unitarianism and the Reformation, by Rev. S. C. Beach; Unitarianism in England, by Rev. Brooke Herford; American Unitarianism and German Thought, by Rev. J. H. Allen; Church and Parish in Massachusetts, by Rev. G. E. Ellis; Early New-England Unitarians, by Rev. A. P. Peabody; Channing, by Rev. G. W. Briggs; Transcendentalism, by Rev. F. Tiffany; Theodore Parker, by Rev. S. B. Stewart; Unitarianism and Modern Literature, by Rev. F. Hornbrooke; Unitarianism and Modern Biblical Criticism, by Rev. J. De Normandie; Unitarianism and Modern Scientific Thought, by Rev. T. R. Slicer; Righteousness, by Rev. G. Batchelor; Relation of Unitarianism to Philosophy, by Rev. C. C. Everett; Ecclesiastical and Denominational Tendencies, by Rev. G. Reynolds. Unitarians have always been a little inclined to felicitate themselves, not without reason, as regards fearlessness of statement, integrity of conduct, and literary gifts, and this book will be very grateful to devoted Unitarians, while to others it may suggest the thought that the name is made to cover too much when it is taken as representing on the one hand the doctrines of the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds and on the other deism and Darwinism. All the speakers were candid, Mr. Allen especially so, in declaring that primitive Christianity was not what is represented by the Unitarian faith. Prof. Everett's lecture carefully distinguished the faith from agnosticism and materialism.

ARYAN SUN-MYTHS THE ORIGIN OF RELIGIONS. Troy, N. Y.: Nims & Knight. 1889. pp. 192.

THIS is an anonymous work, but has an introduction written by Charles Morris, author of "The Aryan Race." The unknown writer has thoroughly searched for evidence that the cross was known before Christians adopted it, that there were various mythological references to the birth of one from a virgin, and that sun-

myths in a general way account for many dogmas held by Christians. He gives a mass of interesting details compiled from many sources, but does not bring his facts to a head unless it be found on page 89, when he says that since the original perfection and subsequent fall of man are no longer to be regarded as truths, so the theology of Christendom must be abandoned. Were he able to distinguish the pure Christian faith from its gross accretions, he would find that his researches left him something more than atheism or mere natural religion, and that the precious traditions of the nations would then take the place which belongs to them.

But such patient searching of the past has great value, although it should be done apart from the representations of those who are somewhat blinded by dislike of Christianity, and we believe that the more thoroughly the myths are brought to view, the sooner will the truths as to what they are appear. That they will show their ethical superiority to many dogmas of mediæval growth is certain.

Woman and Health. By M. Augusta Fairchild, M. D. 1890. Published at 537 Broadway, Quincy, Ill. pp. 384.

In this volume, Dr. Fairchild, whose name is well known to most of our readers, has published the results of her observations and convictions gained during thirty years. She treats of women and children in their physical needs, and also of diseases in general to some degree, recommending always the avoidance of drugs and the pursuance of the course most full of self-control and reason on the patient's part. A believer in free use of water as a remedial agent, and of right living as the great preventive, Mrs. Fairchild seems always to treat her subject in a reverent and religious way, depending to some degree on quotations from other authors, but showing her own good sense at every point.

Palestine Exploration Fund. Statement issued January, 1890. London, 1 Adam Street, Adelphi, W. C. pp. 57.

We wish that more of our people were subscribers to this noble object and so were recipients of the intensely interesting quarterly statements of work. Among the discoveries mentioned are an obelisk at Cæsarea, the first to be found in Palestine; more tombs near the supposed place of our Lord's crucifixion; cisterns in the supposed quarry between Jeremiah's grotto and the city wall; several excavated dwellings in the rock, leading up to the idea that the Jebusites were dwellers in caves natural and artificial; tombs

which seem to have been those of Isaiah and of Susanna; and reasons for believing that Joshua's battle of Merom was not fought near Lake Huleh but near Dothan.

FIVE SERMONS ON MARRIAGE. By CHARLES H. MANN. New York: N. C. Board of Publication. 1889. pp. 74.

MR. MANN'S Sermons on Marriage are already well known and yet have a large use to fulfil in this second edition. He says upon the title page that they give "some of the practical bearings of the teachings of Swedenborg's work on 'Conjugial Love,'" and this is his aim throughout. Popular Misconceptions, True Marriage, Realizing True Marriages on Earth, Unhappy Marriages, and Marriage in Heaven are the topics.

Is Marriage Lawful and Conjugial Love Possible between People of Different Faiths? is a well-printed pamphlet from the pen of Glendower C. Ottley, of London, and is issued by the Educational Institute. Mr. Ottley, who is a very earnest and devoted man, goes at once to his point and gives his reasons from the doctrines for reaching a negative answer to his question. We have so lately given our views on the same subject that we need not say more, except to commend the fearless but considerate manner in which Mr. Ottley has treated this most serious subject.

The Marriage Covenant is the title of a model pamphlet written and published by Rev. Adolph Roeder, of Vineland, N. J. It treats of the ideal, the real, and the possible marriage in a helpful way, first speaking of the heavenly marriage, then pointing out the many disorders now prevailing, and so concluding with wise suggestions as to what marriage may become with the prayerful.

DR. W. H. HOLCOMBE'S pamphlet called "Condensed Thoughts about Christian Science" has been issued in a seventh edition by the Purdy Publishing Company of Chicago, and they will soon publish another essay by him on "Influence of Fear in Disease."

Christian Science is a little magazine published by the Christian Science Publishing Co. of Chicago. The same ladies who carry on the periodical announce a Theological Seminary for the Christian Science ministry.

Vick's Floral Guide for 1890 (James Vick, Rochester, N. Y.), is at hand, full of interesting matter for farmers and gardeners, and mentioning new wonders among flowers.

THE NEW CHURCH.

FUTURE CONVENTION WORK.

EVERY one who has observed the working of the General Convention for the last twenty years has noticed that the proceedings have been gradually changing. To him of longer experience the fact would be still more manifest. To those acquainted with the English Conference the change which has taken place in Convention seems to have borne it from the same use performed by Conference to a very different one. When one attends the Conference and sees the care exercised over minute details of business, the discussions incidental to ordaining a minister, and the mass of routine work almost excluding the consideration of broad spiritual questions, he is reminded that Convention once spent its time in the same way, though it had more sermons during the session.

It would not be easy to point out the precise year when Convention began to free itself from its minor cares in order to attend to greater ones, but that such freedom has been to a great degree secured is indisputable. In general, the Associations have been invited to attend to some matters before held in the hands of Convention. In general, boards and corporations have been created to do specific duties under the auspices of the Convention. In general, Convention has declined to go into matters which would consume time, but has sent them to committees. An individual who would now occupy much time with affairs peculiar to himself, would seem out of place in Convention, though formerly there was a good deal of unprofitable personal vindication and the like.

These changes have gone so far that it is seen by many that further progress in the same direction would put Convention aside from all its control, and they desire that it should not give up its present veto power upon an Association's choice of an ordaining minister, nor cease to note the performance of ministerial duties. We agree with this view; we prefer that, for the present at least, Convention stand just where it is, exercising its functions as the highest body of the organized New Church, so far as those functions belong to it and not to a subordinate body.

But it will never again resume, we may be sure, the duties which it has released to the Associations.

This being so, what is left for Convention to do? Has it freed itself for more efficient performance of general uses, or has it simply become a deliberative and not an executive body? It is evident that there is still in its hands one great use which must continually enlarge. Some are accustomed to say that it has three such uses, namely, publication, training of ministers, and missions. We think not. Publication has been given to a board, separately incorporated. There may be excellent reason for speaking in Convention in favor of the *Messenger*, but we have a feeling that no appeal made in Convention is so efficient as one made by the manifest merits of the paper. The needs of the Theological School may be made a subject of report and remark, but we doubt that such remarks are as potent as the good work of one graduate. Moreover, the dominant purpose of the attention given to these two uses is their missionary serviceableness. No one appeals for the *Messenger* or the School except on the ground of extending the knowledge of the new truths and the reception of them. The missionary use is destined to be the great subject for Convention's deliberation and action — its leading function.

No Assoçiation can do this general work without interfering with some other similar body. No one can take charge of a foreign field without usurping the functions of the general body. In the whole space not occupied by the lesser bodies the Convention must work. It has only begun to do so. In the gratifying exhibits of results made by the efficient secretary of the Board of Missions, the Convention should recognize a call to much greater efforts. The time has already come when the accounts of missionary labors are the most eagerly read of all the contents of the *Messenger*, and when a student for the ministry endeavors to train himself for missionary as well as pastoral work. The time is certainly near when Convention will have a salaried mission secretary, himself a worker in the field perhaps, and when all other matters will be compressed rather than have the time given to missions, home and foreign, abridged.

It will be a glorious session of Convention which fully realizes this idea, it will be an uplifting time, a time full of Bible promise, and potent speaking, and self-sacrificing contributions. It may not come at once, there are always a few to oppose every movement,

but signs are not wanting that a deeper interest in missions is felt almost everywhere, that the state of the world improves as to its receptivity, and that our people are becoming ready to do their utmost to preach the gospel to every creature.

FROM A NEW MAN.

We give our readers extracts from an interesting letter lately received from California. As to our new friend's closing wish, we believe that he need not fear:

When I resigned as pastor in the Congregational church I felt that I should stand in the pulpit no more, but am very glad to find the earnest little band at —— ready to give me an opportunity to continue as a herald of the truth now that the truth is for the first time upon my lips. The truth as it now possesses me seems so glorious that I must have preached in a private manner to all, and possibly I might have done as much to stir up men's minds in that way as in the pulpit.

One thing troubles me a little as I come in contact with New-Church people, and that is what appears to me — coming from the more aggressive methods employed by the old churches — very much like selfish indifference. They explain their quiet methods of work so as evidently to satisfy their ideas of obligation by saying that only as the Lord calls men and opens their hearts and minds for the reception of the truth is it of any use for us to call them. This I am eager to admit, but ask them to prove, first, that the Lord has not already prepared thousands all about them, and secondly, that He is not now trying to use their voice with which to call them at last into the full blaze of light toward which they have been impelled to grope though blood marks the way. I believe two large classes of people to be capable of receiving this spiritual bread and at the same time to be starving for want of it. One, of course, is in the church, and the other in the highways and hedges. It seems to me that the New Church should be as aggressive as the Jesuits, not to increase its organized membership, but to "compel them to come in" to this feast.

Hoping you will not think it necessary first of all to teach me how to hide my light under a bushel, I am, etc.

THE SPHERE ABOUT THE THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL.

There seems to be an impression in some quarters that the location of the Theological School in Cambridge, Mass., was an unwise move because of the Arianism which characterizes that place. We had nothing to do with the selection of Cambridge, but we should not have found a reason for doubt in this allegation; for we do not approve of keeping the school under glass as it were, and sending forth as ministers men who know nothing of the beliefs or disbeliefs of the world into which they go. But it would be much easier for a stranger than for one somewhat acquainted with the

city of Cambridge, and with Harvard University, to tell what is the religious complexion of either. The place has many churches and is remarkably devoted to them; but, with seven Baptist Churches, five Congregational, five Episcopal, six Methodist, five Roman, and but four Unitarian and three Universalist Churches, the preponderance is not Arian, it is evident. We should say that within the radius of a mile from our school, the Episcopalian Church was the most active. As to the University, it would be nearly as difficult to name the preponderating influence, because so much pains is taken to be impartial. The president is a layman — a Unitarian. The preachers are six — two Episcopal, two Congregational, and two Unitarian. The dean of the Divinity school connected with the University is a Unitarian, some of the other instructors are not. The Episcopal Theological School is a larger institution than the Harvard School. It seems to us that this balance of influences has an effect which makes the place remarkably well suited to our purpose, and that it will be still better suited if, as some believe to be likely, other theological schools are located here. Already, among the more than two hundred teachers and two thousand students we suppose every form of belief to be represented in about the same degree as it exists in the world at large.

CAN WE HAVE A REVIEW?

WEBSTER defines a magazine as a "pamphlet periodically published containing miscellaneous compositions." It was therefore proper to call the periodical first published by a few devoted men in 1827 the "NEW-JERUSALEM MAGAZINE." The first number contained no editorial matter except the advertisement, and only five papers which were "Thoughts on Revivals," "Thoughts on Providence," a sermon, a review of three pamphlets by or concerning Channing, and a letter on Prayer. It was a noble effort, and yet it would have been absurd to call this pamphlet of thirty-two pages by any other name than magazine.

Our number now contains sixty-four pages, and may be extended to seventy-two at small additional expense. Taking any number as a specimen we find that it contains about six carefully prepared papers on Scriptural and other suitable subjects, including book-reviews, historical sketches, and discussions of questions of the day in the light of our doctrines. Poetry is not wanting, although our people have scarcely entered upon this field. Then there are

five additional departments, but one of which was in existence ten years ago.

We have made some progress. A little more will bring us to the place where it will be mere admiration for the past to retain the old name. Why, then, should we not take this step in advance?

The only obstacle that we can see is a financial one. Since the weekly *Messenger* was started, the MAGAZINE has not met its expenses. The improvements to which we have alluded have not been remunerative in a pecuniary way. This fact causes us neither surprise nor disappointment. Indeed, in this early day of the new age to be told that every minister must have a secular work in order to support himself would not surprise us. Missionary work is never pecuniarily remunerative. The question for our people is, Can we find means to publish a review? If it be possible, it is a duty to do it.

A LAYMAN'S CRITICISM.

A THOUGHTFUL member of the church lately said that he had found much of the preaching to which he had listened unedifying, because it was so often "either (1) not distinctively New Church, or (2) wearisome in reiteration of elementary things, or (3) it dwells too much on such matters as the duty of attending church, the duty of participating in social gatherings, the necessity of society membership, or the evil of attending any other than our own churches."

So far as he is correct in his description it is evident that the ministry is following too narrow a line of thought. We do not believe this to be generally true, for we believe that our ministers study the Word and man so closely that they have something of value to give on Sunday, affording to the hearer some degree of satisfaction. It is evident that one would soon destroy his usefulness as a preacher by placing his sermons under the classification given above.

GENERAL CHURCH OF PENNSYLVANIA.

THE annual meeting of this body was held in November, but we saw no account of it till recently. The subject for two days was the dissatisfaction felt by members with the Convention, and no way of joining in its practical work was mentioned. Rev. Mr. Benade was sufficiently well to be present. Rev. L. G. Jordan was installed pastor in the place of Rev. L. H. Tafel deposed.

AN EXCELLENT RECOGNITION.

WHAT could be more proper than the way in which the twenty-fifth anniversary of Rev. J. C. Ager's settlement was observed at Brooklyn, N. Y., in January? With many people present in the lecture room, which had been tastefully adorned, with kind letters from other ministers, and with a very substantial recognition in the form of Dr. Moffatt's address and a purse, the event went off in a way to give great encouragement to the minister and to other ministers.

SWEDENBORG PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION.

THE report which this body has sent out of its work during the year 1889, shows that 6,355 books were sold, some $3,400 expended, and a most interesting correspondence kept up with subscribers to the *New Christianity*. The $1,200 received from the Bissell fund seems to have been needed. Rev. B. F. Barrett, Germantown, Penn., will send the pamphlet to any one applying for it.

MISSION SERVICES IN DETROIT.

WE were much pleased to receive a circular announcing a series of services to be held by Rev. Messrs. Mercer, Goddard, Cabell, and Dole in the church of which Rev. A. F. Frost is pastor. The manner of announcing the subjects seemed just right. Mr. Mercer held services at first through a whole week and on Sunday evening in a large hall.

ANOTHER HELPER.

REV. GEO. W. SAVORY of the Congregational church has resigned his position, after finding it impossible to preach the new doctrines from his old pulpit, and has been engaged by the society at San Diego, Cal. He was baptized by Rev. D. V. Bowen.

THE KINDEST MENTION.

WE were much pleased to see the prospectus of our MAGAZINE published gratuitously, of course, in the *Schuylerville Standard*, published near Saratoga, N. Y. We should be glad to see it elsewhere if the way can be found.

NEW-YORK ASSOCIATION.

THE first number of a manual of this body has received cordial welcome. It has much to tell of work done by the missionary, Rev. J. B. Parmelee, and by the pastors outside of their parishes.

THE RELIGIOUS WORLD.

DO THEY KNOW US?

THE editor of the N. Y. *Independent* lately received the following letter:

My wife, very dear to me, has lately passed beyond the veil. I often find myself querying: Does she see me? Does she know what I am doing? Does she read, perchance, the letters of condolence I receive, and those I write to sympathizing friends, about the deep sorrow into which her death has plunged me? I do not know of any passage in the Bible that would justify me in thinking her so near at hand, and so conversant with earthly occurrences and scenes. Perhaps you can refer me to such a passage, or can present considerations which bear strongly in that direction.

His answer, which we must abridge, was:

1. These questions and all similar ones in respect to the dead, have no practical significance. Duties remain the same, whether the question can be answered or not, and if answered, no matter what the answer may be. 2. As to the question whether the dead continue to be "conversant with earthly occurrences and scenes," and hence to see and know those whom they have left behind, no answer can be given, either affirmatively or negatively, on the basis of mere reason; and so far as we know, no answer is, either directly or suggestively, given in the Bible. We are hence in the state of ignorance on the point referred to by our correspondent, and must so remain as long as we continue in the present world. 3. We can remember our departed friends as we knew them to be when living, and also think of them as we hope they are in the spirit world; and assuming their continued existence with the retention of the intellectual faculties which they had when on earth, we can reasonably infer that they remember us as they knew us to be when dwelling with us in this world of trial. We may thus, in the absence of present intercourse with them, use our past knowledge in a *quasi*-communion with them; and it seems highly probable that they may do the same thing in a like communion with us. Though absent, they are not absolutely lost to us, and we may reasonably conclude that we are not absolutely lost to them. What has occurred is a separation, and, for the time being, a suspension of all conscious present intercourse between the living and the dead. This lost intercourse may be, and presumably will be, renewed hereafter between those knowing and known to each other, who shall heaeafter be dwellers in the same world. Those who precede us in death will not return to us. We must go to them. This was King David's idea. 4. We are assured upon the authority of the Bible that there is one Being in Heaven who is dearer to us than it is possible for wife or child to be, if we love and trust Him as we ought, who on earth was "in all points tempted like as we are," and who does watch over us, care for us, and profoundly sympathize with us

in every trial of life. That Being is the Lord Jesus Christ, the God-Man on earth and the God-Man in Heaven. 5. Having the sympathizing friendship of Christ, and knowing that we have it, we must rely on Him, and seek comfort in Him, patiently accepting the absence of dear ones that we have loved and lost on earth, and hoping to meet them, to know them, and to renew our intercourse with them in a brighter and better world.

The light here is not strong as a better understanding of the Scripture "He shall give His angels charge over us" would give, but it is brilliant as compared with old ideas.

LETTER FROM JERUSALEM.

OUR last letter from the friends in El-Kuds says:

The new pasha is pushing on the work on the Jericho road, and is making a "highway in the desert." When this road is completed it will sever one of the most characteristic links connecting us with Bible times. You will then go to Jericho in two hours over a smooth road. Hitherto we have crawled painfully up or down with the animal picking his way carefully over rugged stones and between rocks.

Many other landmarks and timemarks are disappearing in the same way, and those who have already visited the land may be glad to have seen it in its down-trodden condition.

Did you know any thing of Mr. Joseph of the "Evangelical Mission to Israel?" A few days ago they sent for us, saying that both he and his wife were sick. We went to them. Mrs. Joseph died the next day, and we brought Mr. Joseph here to nurse him. He is now much better. There has been much sickness in Jerusalem. Hardly any one we know but has suffered. Praise God we are well and able to help the suffering ones.

MISSIONARY APPEAL.

DR. BARNUM, of Harpoot, Turkey, pleads with young men to enter the ministry as missionaries:

How shall we account for this deplorable fascination of the world except that the Church, by coming into conformity with this materialistic age, has so far lost her spirituality that she is influenced and largely controlled by worldly maxims? Christian parents, when planning for the future of their children, are apt to turn them away from the ministry and other forms of direct Christian service, and excuse themselves with the plea that Christians are needed in every department of life. This disregard of a plain call of duty results in darkness of soul and spiritual barreness. But it is not parents alone who are responsible. The Church is largely in sympathy with this feeling, and the young, who daily breathe a worldly atmosphere, are captivated by the allurements of the world. It offers the hope of more money than the ministry. The restraints upon worldly pleasures are less, and the road to honor is supposed to be a broader one. But how unworthy a motive for a citizen of heaven! How low an estimate is thus put upon the highest, the noblest, the most sacred of all callings!

If you dedicate yourself with all your faculties and powers to the Lord, to be used for the extension of His kingdom, you may not be rich, but you shall have treasures laid up in heaven. You may not partake largely of what men call pleasure, but you will have, even in this life, such peace of mind as the world cannot give — heaven begun below — and the fulness of heavenly bliss forever and ever. You may not do any thing which shall attract special attention among men, but nothing that you do for God's kingdom shall be lost.

DECLINE OF RELIGION IN CHINA.

Rev. George Owen, of Peking, writing in the *Missionary Herald* of Chinese religious history, says:

The history of China is a striking instance of the down-grade in religion. The old classics of China, going back to the time of Abraham, show a wonderful knowledge of God. There are passages in those classics about God worthy to stand side by side with kindred passages in the Old Testament. The fathers and founders of the Chinese race appear to have been monotheists. They believed in an omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent God, the moral governor of the world, and the impartial judge of men.

But gradually the grand conception of a personal God became obscured. Nature-worship crept in. Heaven and earth were deified, and God was confounded with the material heavens and the powers of nature. Heaven was called father, and earth mother, and became China's chief god. Then the sun, moon, and stars were personified and worshipped. China bowed down to "the hosts of heaven." The great mountains and rivers were also deified and placed among the state gods.

Having told more about the pagan rites, he concludes by saying:

A new era has begun in China, an era of railways, telegraphs, and science-schools. Before the fierce light of modern science the gross idolatry of China must gradually disappear. But science, like the sun, conceals more than it reveals — it shows us earth, but shuts out the heavens with their infinite, starry depths. Science may destroy the idols, but will not reveal God. It may breed skepticism, but will not inspire faith. And I would rather see the Chinese polytheists than atheists. Superstition is better than unbelief. Only the Bible can give back to China the lost knowledge of God, and we have now a grand opportunity of giving her that Bible. The whole of that great empire is now open to us, and we are free to preach the Gospel and to distribute the Word of Life among its teeming millions. Christians, seize the opportunity; give, pray, hope for China's salvation.

BROWNING'S RELIGION.

Mr. M. D. Conway writes in *The Nation* of the poet Browning's faith:

Browning's "orthodoxy" brought him into many a combat with his rationalistic friends, some of whom could hardly believe that he took his doctrine seriously.

Such was the fact, however; indeed, I have heard that he once stopped near an open-air assembly, which an atheist was haranguing, and, in the freedom of his *incognitio*, gave strenuous battle to the opinions uttered. To one who had spoken of an expected "Judgment Day" as a superstition, I heard him say: "I don't see that. Why should there not be a settling day in the universe, as when a master settles with his workmen at the end of the week?" There was something in his tone and manner which suggested his dramatic conception of religious ideas and ideals. At times his conversation had to my ear a tinge of the Swedenborgian idea of "Correspondences." In his excellent introduction to the spurious Shelley letters, he speaks of the best-beloved of his poets as representing the "Correspondency" between nature and the divine. But Browning's religion is too large and intricate a theme to be here discussed.

MISSIONARY ACTIVITY.

Good Tidings answers wisely a question as to the duty of the church in regard to missionary efforts, and concludes with the words:

Our societies, therefore, should constantly be on the alert to watch for opportunities of propagating a knowledge in the community of the precious truths now revealed. Sunday and week evening lectures well advertised, the members themselves taking an active interest, and inviting others to come and hear; special replies to antagonists, either from the pulpit or through the press; insertion of regular press notices in the leading journals, presenting a synopsis of sermons, etc.; these are some of the methods which have been found beneficial. But especially be it remembered, that "the internal Church makes a one with the Church in heaven, thus makes a one with heaven; and that the internal must be formed before the external, and afterwards the external by the internal" (T. C. R. 784); and so let our *ordinary* meetings for worship and instruction as instrumental to the life of use, be prized, and regularly and punctually attended, as a privilege of inestimable value. We shall become prepared in this way effectually to promote the objects for which the New Church is given, and to rejoice in its increasing prosperity.

LAST WORDS.

The Bishop of Durham's funeral was announced by a notice which begun with the following words, taken from his last public discourse:

I believe from my heart that the truth which this Gospel (St. John) more especially enshrines — the truth that Jesus Christ is the very Word Incarnate, the manifestation of the Father to mankind — is the one lesson which, duly apprehended, will do more than all our feeble efforts to purify and elevate human life here, by imparting to it hope, and light, and strength, the one study which alone can fitly prepare us for a joyful immortality hereafter.

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